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VOLUME 100



THE WINGED CHARIOT

*Collected Essays on Plato and Platonism
in Honour of L.M. de Rijk*

EDITED BY

MARIA KARDAUN AND JOKE SPRUYT



BRILL
LEIDEN · BOSTON · KÖLN
2000

This book is printed on acid-free paper.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

The winged chariot : collected essays on Plato and platonism in honour
of L.M. de Rijk / edited by Maria Kardaun and Joke Spruyt.

p. cm. — (Brill's studies in intellectual history, ISSN
0920-8607 ; v. 100)

Includes index.

ISBN 9004114807

I. Plato. I. Rijk, Lambertus Maria de. II. Kardaun, Maria.

III. Spruyt, Joke, 1955- IV. Series.

B395.W72 2000

184—dc21

00-039827

CIP

Die Deutsche Bibliothek - CIP-Einheitsaufnahme

The winged chariot : collected essays on Plato and Platonism in honour
of L.M. de Rijk / ed. by Maria Kardaun and Joke Spruyt. — Leiden ;
Boston ; Köln : Brill, 2000

(Brill's studies in intellectual history ; Vol. 100)

ISBN 90-04-11480-7

ISSN 0920-8607
ISBN 90 04 11480 7

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Danvers MA 01923, USA.
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PRINTED IN THE NETHERLANDS

ὁ μὲν δὴ μέγας ἡγεμὼν ἐν οὐρανῷ Ζεὺς, ἐλαύνων πτηνὸν ἄρμα,
πρῶτος πορεύεται, διακοσμῶν πάντα καὶ ἐπιμελούμενος·
τῷ δ' ἔπεται στρατιὰ θεῶν τε καὶ δαιμόνων ...

Now the great leader in heaven, Zeus, drives a winged chariot
and comes before all others, arranging and caring for all things.
After him follows a host of gods and other supernatural figures ...

Phaedrus 246E4-6

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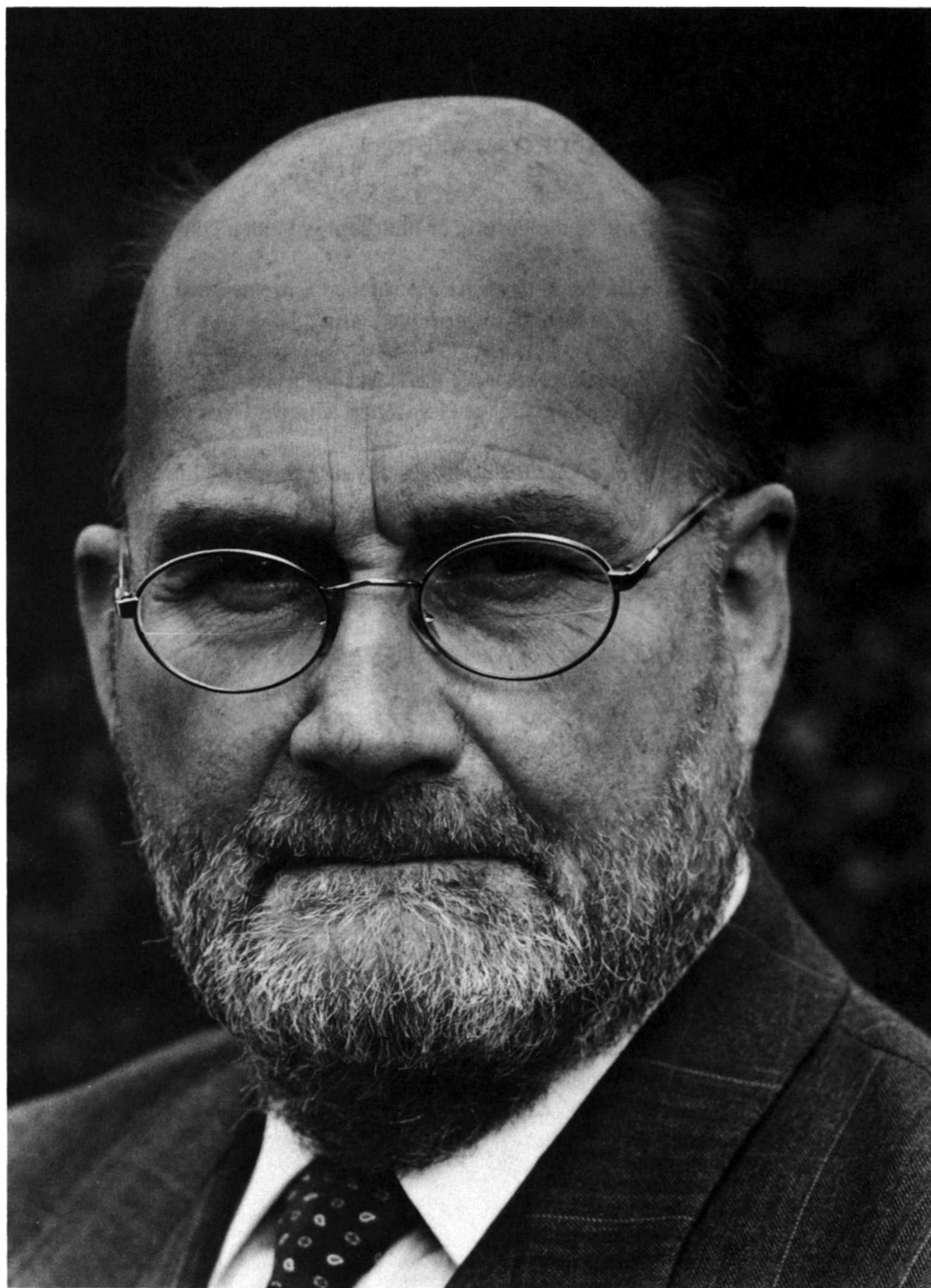
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Professor L.M. de Rijk

EDITORS' INTRODUCTION

One of the most haunting images of the human soul ever conceived is that in the *Phaedrus*: the charioteers striving upwards with their winged steeds in pursuit of the gods, struggling and sweating in order to get a glimpse of Reality in the plain of Truth. Next, after their inevitable fall and loss of wings, the soul's plumage has to start growing again—a hurtful but beneficent process that is compared to the teething of children.

There can be no doubt that Plato has feathered Western thought, passing on his love of wisdom to other gods and demigods, sometimes demons even. Driven by his divine *mania*, Plato never ceased to try to uncover the true nature of all being, and spent a lifetime to teach his followers and guide them in their intellectual pursuits.

From afar this *mania* has reached the editors of the present volume, who each in their own way became lovers of wisdom too, and this especially through the agency of Professor L.M. de Rijk. It is hard to give a satisfactory description of this very colourful and intriguing scholar. Besides his intense academic productivity throughout the past five decades and his long-time membership of the Dutch Senate, his genuine passion for knowledge has fostered many of his colleagues, among whom the majority of the contributors to this volume. As to his pupils, in spite of his increasing age he never tires of guiding them on their journey towards higher standards, or in the terminology of the *Phaedrus*: he drives his winged chariot and comes before all others, arranging and caring for all things.

For so many years now his pupils and colleagues have been able to profit from his vast knowledge and experience. Moreover, many of them have had the good fortune to be able to count on him as their mentor and friend. As long-time pupils and friends of de Rijk's, the editors of this book, as a token of their great appreciation and gratitude, felt the need to shed more light on a side of his work that—even though he has published several pioneering works in this field, like *Plato's Sophist* (1986), his articles on Gilbert of Poitiers, as well as articles on the ontology of Boethius and on Proclus—has remained hitherto underexposed, viz. a Platonic thread throughout his innovative work in the field of ancient and medieval philosophy.

The ten studies, then, that form the contents of this volume were written and collected to honour Professor L.M. de Rijk, on the occasion of his seventy-fifth birthday. We are delighted that we were able to find such distinguished colleagues who were ready to contribute their substantial articles, written especially for this happy occasion; although not every one of the

contributors has actually worked with Professor de Rijk, we have all benefited greatly from his writings. The volume is devoted to central parts of Plato's philosophy, including its pre-Socratic origins and later developments. The contributions have been arranged in a chronological order.

It is common knowledge that the core of Plato's work is formed by the semantics and logic of the notion of *being*. Denis O'Brien (II) concentrates on this key notion by pursuing the doctrine of *being* and its counterpart of *non-being* as handled by Plato and his predecessor Parmenides. His answer to the controversy between Plato and Parmenides about the proposition 'what is not, is' is that for Plato, but not for Parmenides, we should distinguish between two ways of interpreting the negation of being. It should be taken either as the denial of any kind of being whatsoever, i.e. the failure to participate in being, or as the participation in otherness in relation to being. C.H. Kneepkens's contribution (IX) presents an enquiry into the notion of *being* by looking into the twelfth-century developments in the field of grammar and semantics. He introduces us to two fundamentally different ways in which the verb 'to be' is dealt with in that period. While both Peter Helias and Gilbert of Poitiers use the threefold distinction of 'substance' in analysing the substantive verb 'be', they develop this distinction in completely different ways: Peter Helias basically departs from Aristotle's logico-ontological presuppositions found at work in the *Categories*, whereas the Porretani continue along the lines of the ontology and philosophy of the Neoplatonist Gilbert of Poitiers. In E.P. Bos's contribution (X), which presents an edition of Petrus Thomae's *De distinctione predicamentorum*, it is demonstrated how according to this author the Aristotelian division of the categories is in fact a division of things that are distinct by nature: the categories are a kind of Platonic Forms. Semantics is also the subject of Joke Spruyt's contribution (VIII). She explores the ideas of Gilbert of Poitiers on the way in which the significates of terms are transformed when transportation from the transcendent to the sublunary domain and *vice versa* takes place.

Plato's theory of knowledge is a second theme featuring in this volume. It forms the subject-matter of Johannes M. van Ophuijsen's paper (IV), in which he deals with the Platonic notion of *pistis*. Starting from Plato's distinction between the domain of true knowledge as distinguished from that of opinion, Van Ophuijsen examines to what extent *pistis* was likely to become linked up with the later notion of (Christian) faith. The Platonic conception of knowledge and learning is also the focus of Frans A.J. de Haas's contribution (VI), which gives a detailed account of the way in which Neoplatonism used Aristotle's analogy of the writing tablet to reconcile the latter's notion of potentiality with the Platonic idea of knowledge as recollection.

A third theme covers Plato's conception of the soul. Jaap Mansfeld's contribution (I) shows to what extent pre-Socratic traditions have contrib-

uted to Plato's conception of the soul as developed in the *Phaedo*. Maria Kardaun (V) argues that on the basis of a correct understanding of the Greek word *mimesis* it is possible to present Plato's critique of the arts as a fairly coherent doctrine that fits well with the basic tenets of Plato's philosophy, particularly with his conception of the soul.

Plato's philosophy of nature and cosmology are the themes of the two remaining contributions, by David T. Runia (III) and Willemien Otten (VII). Runia's paper focusses on the *Timaeus*, paying particular attention to the logical achievements of the protagonist of this dialogue. Runia chiefly argues against the German scholar Theodor Ebert, who severely criticised the arguments of the *Timaeus* figure, claiming that this kind of logic undermines the centrepiece of Plato's cosmology. Instead Runia argues that there is nothing wrong with *Timaeus*'s logic, and moreover, that the principles the dialogue starts off with are the same metaphysical principles that feature in the mature stages of Plato's philosophy. The *Timaeus* is also prominently present in Willemien Otten's paper on the twelfth-century thinker William of Conches (VIII). Otten shows how William of Conches's way of reading Plato—a method which includes both rational argumentation as well as delicate techniques to uncover Platonic myth—, was seen as undermining the Christian doctrine.

Acknowledgements

The editors would like to express their heartfelt gratitude to their friend and brother, Dr Jan Kardaun, and their colleague and friend, Dr Chris Leonards, for their invaluable help and technical support in preparing the manuscripts. Furthermore we wish to thank Professor Arjo Vanderjagt, Director of *Brill's Studies in Intellectual History*, for accepting this book into his series of prestige.

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forthcoming

'"Being as Truth" in Aristotle and Giraldus Odonis O.F.M. (d.1349)' in Acts of the Academy Colloquium *Thirty Years Logica Modernorum*, 5-7 November 1997, Amsterdam (forthcoming)

Aristotle. Semantics and Ontology (forthcoming)

CHAPTER ONE
PHYSICAL *DOXAI* IN THE *PHAEDO*

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1. Soul as harmony

At *Phd.* 85E-86D (cf. 91C) Simmias develops his famous argument that the soul is like a ‘harmony’ (ἁρμονία),¹ or ‘attunement’, as in the ‘attuned lyre’, lyres and their strings being corporeal and ‘compound’ (σύνθετα),² or like a ‘blending’ (κρᾶσις) and ‘harmony’ of ‘the hot, the cold, the dry and the wet’ which hold the body together, ‘when these are mixed with each other rightly and in due measure’. So it must be mortal.³ It should be noticed that before, at 72E-77A, the thesis that learning is recollection has been discussed, with as its corollary that the soul exists before birth. This has been accepted by all present. At 91E-92A both Simmias and Cebes declare that they still accept this view. The *anamnēsis* doctrine focuses on the cognitive function of soul, not on the vital function which plays a dominant part in other sections of the dialogue.

The origin of the soul-as-harmony doctrine is a bit of a riddle. The fact that, as we shall see, no precise and unambiguous early Presocratic parallel is to be found is in favour of the assumption that it was invented by Plato, as a sort of argumentative ploy. But evidence in the fourth chapter of the first book of Aristotle’s *De anima* seems to militate against this assumption, at least at first sight. For Aristotle informs us that this ‘is another *doxa* which has been transmitted’, and that it is seen as ‘plausible by numerous people: for harmony is a blend and compound (κρᾶσιν καὶ σύνθεσιν) of opposites, and the body too consists of opposites’.⁴ This statement appears to entail that it was a wide-spread view, to be placed on the same level as other early

¹ ἁρμονία is ambiguous: in the *Phaedo* it is presumably used both in the musical sense and in that of the being fitted together of something’s parts so that it forms a whole, see e.g. Loriaux (1975) 19. For the musical sense in Plato see *Smp.* 187A-C (where Heracl. fr. B51—see below, n. 20—is partly quoted partly paraphrased), with the comment of Kirk (1962) 204; also see *ibid.* 208. Cf. further below, p 3

² Cf. *Phd.* 92A, ἁρμονίαν εἶναι σύνθετον πρᾶγμα.

³ Passage discussed by Gottschalk (1971) 179-81.

⁴ *An.* I.4.407b27-32. Cf. Gottschalk (1971) 182, Witt (1992) 178-9.

views about the soul treated by Aristotle in the previous chapters. But note that he does not attach a name-label.⁵

Plato moreover makes Simmias affirm that it 'is accepted by most people' (*Phd.* 92D), and Echecrates had already said that he has always been impressed by it (88D). Furthermore, Aristotle tells us that 'it has given an account of itself *κάν τοῖς ἐν κοινῷ γεγεννημένοις λόγοις*, as if to judges (*ὥσπερ εὐθύνοις*)'.⁶ Does this remark support one's impression that we are actually dealing with a wide-spread and early tenet? I think not. Following a suggestion of ps.Simplicius I believe that *τοῖς ἐν κοινῷ γεγεννημένοις λόγοις* refers to Aristotle's own (lost) dialogue *Eudemus* and to the *Phaedo*, and that what Aristotle means is: 'in *published* discussions', available to whoever cares⁷ (for the Platonic background of its general acceptance see below). It is indeed in the *Phaedo* that this *doxa* gives an account of itself, and is judged. The same, presumably, was true of the discussion in the *Eudemus*, which at least in this respect seems to have been to some extent a rehash and further refinement of arguments in Plato's dialogue⁸ (others were added by Aristotle). In the *De anima* Simmias' affirmation that the soul as harmony is a common view is taken *au pied de la lettre*.⁹

⁵ Gottschalk (1971) 192; cf. n. 9 below.

⁶ Compare Plu. *Praec.* 800D, οὐ γὰρ ὧν λέγουσιν ἐν κοινῷ καὶ πράττουσιν οἱ πολιτεύομενοι μόνον εὐθύνας διδόνασιν, ἀλλὰ κτλ., 'for not only are men in public life held responsible for their public works and actions, but' etc., Socr. *Ep.* 1.2, τὰς διατριβὰς ἐν κοινῷ ποιούμεθα, ἐπίσης ὁμοίως ἀκούειν τε αἰεὶ ὄντι τε καὶ μὴ, 'our [*scil.*, Socrates'] discourses are open to the public, and it is each time equally possible to listen or not to listen', ps.Plu. *Vit. X or.* 841F, τὰς τραγωδίας αὐτῶν ἐν κοινῷ γραγαμένους φυλάττειν, 'that their tragedies be written out and kept in a public archive', D. Chr. *Or.* 31.53, καὶ μὴν καὶ γράμματα ἐστὶν ἐν κοινῷ περὶ τούτων, ὑπὲρ ὧν ἔφην. τὰ γὰρ ψηφίσματα γέγραπται δῆπουθεν τὰ τῶν τιμῶν καὶ δημοσίᾳ μένει τὸν ἅπαντα χρόνον, 'and besides, there is public evidence in writing of the matters of which I have spoken; for the honorific decrees are of course inscribed, and remain for ever on public record'. Cf. D. Chr. *Or.* 11.19, D.H. *Ant.* 6.73.2. See also Gottschalk (1971) 195, who (less plausibly) believes Aristotle has Academic discussions of the *Phaedo* in mind as well. See also Kirk, Raven and Schofield (1983) 346 on the obvious link with the *Phaedo*; here however the passage is still to be found in the Philolaus chapter. Loriaux (1975) 50 firmly subscribes to the view that the "opinions de la foule" are meant. Rowe (1993) 204-5 and 219 seems to be in two minds, and his reference to *Lg.* X.891B-C, a passage which with rhetorical exaggeration converts practically everyone into a philosopher of nature, is unconvincing.

⁷ For ἐν κοινῷ see previous note. Ps.Simpl. in *An.* 53.1-4: 'perhaps' the *Phaedo*, certainly the *Eudemus*, (~ fr. 7 Ross). According to Philoponus. in *An.* 145.19-25 (also ~ fr. 7 Ross) the reference is to the *Eudemus* only (cf. LSJ s.v. κοινός B III.3). Them. in *An.* 24.13 (also ~ fr. 7 Ross) argues that the reference is to other works by Plato or Aristotle. Ps.Simplicius' suggestion is admitted as possible by Burkert (1972) 272, and Gottschalk (1971) 194-6 vigorously defends Platonic authorship. Macrob. *Somn.* I.14.19 (on which see Mansfeld (1990) 3703-5) ascribes the tenet (inclusive of the mortality of the soul) to Pythagoras and Philolaus; but this ascription is based, ultimately, on the *Phaedo* rather than conversely (for another example of such retrograde contamination see e.g. Mansfeld (1990) 3090-1). One of the few things we believe we know about early Pythagoreanism is the doctrine of the soul's immortality.

⁸ For the relation between the *Eudemus* and the *Phaedo* see e.g. Guthrie (1981) 70; compare Berti (1997) 363-8, who however follows Bernays' view that Aristotle only refers to his own lost work. There are seven references by title to the *Phaedo* in Aristotle.

⁹ So also, apparently, at *Pol.* VIII.5.1340a17-9, where name-labels are again lacking.

Aristotle next argues against.¹⁰ Of his arguments, some take up those of Socrates in the *Phaedo*; they need not be discussed here. As to the others I wish to limit the discussion to his criticism of Empedocles.¹¹ He affirms that it is absurd to hold that the soul is the proportion of the blending (κρᾶσις, *scil.* of the opposites, or elements). The proportion constituting flesh is different from that of bone etc., so that on this assumption one would have numerous souls all over the body. This, he continues, is an objection one may bring against Empedocles.¹² We happen to be informed about the doctrine involved. According to Theophrastus¹³ Empedocles held that humans think-and-perceive with the blood, in which the elements are more fully mixed. Theophrastus moreover tells us that according to Empedocles people are more or less bright, or slow or impetuous, depending on the nature of the blend. They are clever orators when a happy blending is found in the tongue, and artisans when this is the case in the hands. In the *De anima* Aristotle had already quoted Empedocles' famous fragment dealing with the doctrine that like knows like, that is to say that 'with earth we see earth, with water water' and so on, and argued that Empedocles turns each element into a soul.¹⁴ The emphasis is on cognition.

Returning now to the discussion in the *Phaedo*, I feel bound to point out that in actual fact Simmias propounds three views which he coalesces and puts on the same level, viz. (1), the soul as a musical harmony plus (2), the soul as a harmony (i.e. fitting together) and compound of constitutive parts. Both (1) and (2) are exemplified by the lyre and its strings. Thirdly, (3) the soul is represented as a (varying) blending of physical contraries, as is the case with the human body. Each time this soul is the remembering, thinking and perceiving soul.

That thought and sensation, or perception, are a product of the (variously blended) elements which make up the human body is an idea found with several Presocratic philosophers. It is criticized by Aristotle more than once, and studied at some length in Theophrastus' *De sensibus*.¹⁵ The best-known examples are Empedocles' views discussed above, and the famous Parmenides fragment which states that 'thought' depends on the 'blending of

¹⁰ *Ibid.* 407b32-30.

¹¹ In his refutation Aristotle applies his usual distinction between composition (σύνθεσις) and blending, but this does not affect the point I wish to make.

¹² Cf. Emp. fr. B96 DK on the production of 'white bones', the first three lines of which are quoted and commented upon in the next chapter, *An.* I.5.410a1-10. Aristotle leaves out line four, which tells us that 'Harmony' glues the elements together. Harmony is another name for Empedocles' principle Love (Φιλότης), which explains why Aristotle mentions Φιλία at 408a22. No term for elemental 'blending' is found in B96, but cf. B71.3 κινναμένων.

¹³ *Sens.* 10-11, with quotation of Emp. fr. B107 DK and paraphrase of B105. See Mansfeld (1996) 175-7.

¹⁴ Emp. fr. B109 DK at *An.* I.2.404b11-5. See Mansfeld (1996) 169.

¹⁵ For the details see Mansfeld (1996).

the limbs'.¹⁶ Cognizing soul-as-harmony in the sense of a compound, or blend, of elements may therefore be seen as being the transposition of a view of which, with some exaggeration, it may be said that it really is traditional and generally accepted.¹⁷ But note that Plato does not speak of elements but mentions the physical *opposites*: the hot and the cold, the wet and the dry.¹⁸ This shift, which via soul as the harmony of the constitutive parts of a musical instrument establishes a link with musical harmony, is legitimated by the fact that a common factor may now be postulated: the union, or combination, of opposites. Like the body, musical harmony is composed of opposites. Moreover Empedocles, as we have seen, has 'Harmony' (~ *Philotès*) glue together the elemental portions which constitute the bones.¹⁹ Whether or not Heraclitus, when speaking of the 'recurrent harmony' of the opposites as exemplified by 'bow and lyre' also has musical harmony in mind is a disputed question.²⁰ I would say that he does not exclude it, and that on the other hand Plato's reference to the harmony of the parts of the lyre echoes the general doctrine of the unity of opposites as argued by the Ephesian.²¹ Furthermore, both Cebes and Simmias have 'consorted with' Philolaus.²² Though this does not entail they are Pythagoreans,²³ what it does suggest is that as Platonic *personae* they are familiar with Philolaus' doctrines. In the genuine fragments of Philolaus 'harmony' plays a decisive part as the factor which combines the 'limiting things and the unlimited things', that is to say the elemental opposites to be found 'in nature'.²⁴ This makes Simmias' exposition of the soul-as-harmony doctrine dramatically plausible.

Accordingly, the soul-as-harmony thesis in the *Phaedo* is Plato's rendering of the view, found with several Presocratic philosophers, that the

¹⁶ Fr. B16 DK, quoted by both Aristotle and Theophrastus: *Met.* IV.5.1009b21-5, *Sens.* 3. See Burkert (1972) 272 with n. 264, who however omits to stress the cognitive aspect.

¹⁷ A bit cavalierly dismissed by Gottschalk (1971) 193-4.

¹⁸ Cf. *Sph.* 242D-243B, 243D, and in general Lloyd (1966) 15-85.

¹⁹ Above n. 12. Provided we assume a creative interpretation, the fact that in Empedocles Ἀρμονίη, who 'joins' the elemental portions 'together' to create the bones, is not musical harmony but one of the personifications of his unifying principle is not to the point.

²⁰ Fr. 27 Marcovich = B51 DK. For references see Kirk (1962) 204-9, Huffman (1993) 138. For Plato's interpretation of Heraclitus' ἀρμονία in a musical sense see above, n. 1.

²¹ Heraclitus' doctrine is also one of the ingredients of the thesis concerning the opposites at *Phd.* 70D-72E, see e.g. Hackforth (1955) 63-4, Bluck (1955) 56 and *ibid.* 86 on the present passages, Gallop (1975) 110.

²² *Phd.* 61D.

²³ Thus Rowe (1993) 7; Sedley (1995) 10-13 argues that they were 'hybrid' Pythagoreans. Ebert (1994) 8-10 argues that the 'Annahme' that Simmias and Cebes are Pythagoreans is 'falsch'. Of course: they are literary characters.

²⁴ Philol. fr. 6 Huffman = fr. B6 DK, 1st part. See Burkert (1972) 250-68, Kirk, Raven and Schofield (1983) 327-8, Huffman (1993) 138-41. On the spurious Philol. fr. B22 *ap.* Claudianus Mamertus, believed to be genuine by Guthrie (1962) 311-2, see Burkert (1972) 247 and the detailed discussion in Huffman (1993) 410-14: the doctrine of soul-as-harmony attributed to Philolaus derives from the *Phaedo*. Huffman (1993) 328-32 nevertheless argues that Philolaus did hold a view of soul as harmony; for further arguments in favour of this hypothesis see Sedley (1995) 22-6.

(varying) blending of the elements, or physical opposites, produces thought and sense-perception—a view later criticized at appropriate length by Aristotle and Theophrastus. This is combined with ideas concerning harmony as uniting, or combining, opposites also found with several Presocratic philosophers. So what we have here is an interpretative blend of views of Parmenides, Empedocles, Heraclitus, and Philolaus—philosophers we may safely assume Plato to have read by the time he wrote the *Phaedo*. The argumentative ploy is that, as noted above, soul as musical harmony is put on a par with soul *qua* result of the blending of the elementary factors which constitute the body. The rejection of the latter view is accomplished by demolishing the former, which is indeed a lot easier to refute. Accordingly, in the argument contra Simmias' thesis at *Phd.* 92A-95A the blend of elemental opposites is silently and simply dropped.

I note in passing that the idea of the soul as a harmony, especially of the World-Soul as a composite harmonic entity disposed according to the musical scale, makes an impressive come-back in the *Timaeus*.

The idea that the human soul is a harmony is not attributed to early thinkers in the doxographical tradition, with the unreliable exceptions of Macrobius and Claudianus Mamertus who mention Pythagoras and Philolaus.²⁵ As to later thinkers, according to the flattened-out *doxa* at Aët. 4.2.7 Diels (both ps.Plutarch and Stobaeus) it is Aristotle's follower Dicaearchus who held that the soul is 'a harmony of the four elements'.²⁶

2. Socrates' 'autobiography'

The most important section of the *Phaedo* containing Presocratic *doxai* is the so-called autobiography of Socrates.²⁷ There are also a few relevant

²⁵ Above n. 7, n. 24.

²⁶ Dicaearch. fr. 12a-b Wehrli, and Theodoret who says 'Clearchus' (Dicaearch. fr. 12c). Also Nemes. *NH* 17.5-10 Morani, who speaks of 'Dinarchus' (Dicaearch. fr. 11). See further Burkert (1972) n. 164, Gottschalk (1971) 184-90, Mansfeld (1990) 3070 and 3118-20 for Philo *Somn.* 1.30 (anonymous), 3078 for the name-label Dicaearchus and its corruptions in various sources (on which also Gottschalk (1971) 185 n. 24, 186-7 n. 28), 3128-30 on Cicero's attribution, *Tusc.* I.19-20, of soul as harmony to Aristoxenus (cf. *Tusc.* I.24, I.41 ~ Aristox. fr. 19-20ab Wehrli; Cicero is our source for this ascription, since Lactantius and Martianus Capella may be believed to derive from him, see Gottschalk (1971) 184-6), 3128 on Nemesius' attribution, *NH* 22.19-21, of this tenet to both 'Dinarchus' and Simmias (!), and 3147, on Lucretius (anonymous). Philp. in *An.* 70.5-9 explains harmony by quoting the 'Pythagorean' definition πολυμυγέων ἐστὶ καὶ διχᾶ φρονεόντων ἔνωσις (also at 146.4-5 and 358.14-5), for which compare the texts printed at Philol. B10 DK (not attributed to Philolaus in the sources however, see Burkert (1972) 249 and Huffman (1993) 416-7). Olymp. in *Phaed.* 10 § 2.3-4 Westerink attributes the *doxa* to 'Simmias [cf. Nemesius] and certain Pythagoreans'. Note that our mutilated text of Olympiodorus' Commentary stops at *Phd.* 79E, so his detailed treatment of the issue is lost.

²⁷ Verbatim quotations of important sections at Eus. *PE* I.8.17 (*Phd.* 96A-C), XIV.14.6 (97B-99C), Stob. I.49.14 (95E-96C; cf. below n. 42).

passages before the account of harmony treated in the previous paragraph. It may be believed that Plato deftly paves the way for the use of such *doxai* and for the *mise-en-scène* which are to follow. The use of the technical terms ‘separating and combining’ (διακρίνεσθαι καὶ συγκρίνεσθαι, *Phd.* 71B6) in the section on the cycle of opposites is a case in point. These terms are first found in Anaxagoras’ verbatim fragments: a form of συγκρίνειν only once (clearly originally a neologism, created as the opposite of διακρίνειν), forms of διακρίνειν six times. In Anaxagoras they are never combined.²⁸ The present passage is the earliest occurrence in Plato’s works,²⁹ and it is significant that Plato combines them the better to bring out the opposition. A little later they occur again (72C); Plato this time mentions Anaxagoras’ name, and turns his cosmology upside down: ‘if everything where to be combined and nothing separated (εἰ συγκρίνοιντο μὲν πάντα διακρίνοιντο δὲ μή), we should soon have the condition of “all things together” described by Anaxagoras’. This jocular remark, quite functional in its context, also prepares the reader, or listener, for the part Anaxagoras is made to play in the story of Socrates’ early intellectual life.

My purpose in looking at this story is not the identification of the individual authors of the physical tenets which are listed by ‘Socrates’, or the study of the περὶ φύσεως ἱστορία (*Phd.* 96A8) in general, though some remarks will be made. What I wish to do is not to repeat what has been done already but to examine the relevant passages from the vantage-point of hindsight: that is to say from the point of view of the later doxographical traditions, especially Aëtius. To say it again: what I intend to study are *sets* of tenets and sets of such sets, not the individual tenets which can be wrenched off from these clusters. True-blue Platonic ingredients will only be discussed when this happens to be unavoidable. On the other hand several related dialectical passages in Aristotle’s treatises will have to be adduced.

Plato has Socrates begin with an appropriate introductory remark. As a young man fascinated by the study of nature he had wanted to learn ‘the causes ..., [viz.] because of what (διὰ τί) a thing comes into being, because of what it perishes and because of what it is’ (*Phd.* 96B9-10). This is because he finds that Cebes’ problem involves ‘the cause of coming to be and perishing’ (95E9). The issue of being, and of coming to be and passing

²⁸ Fr. 4.21 DK συγκρινόμενοις, B12.19 διακρινόμενα, B12.29 διακρίνεται, B13.9 and 11 διακρινόμενων and διακρίνεσθαι. In fr. B17.6-8 DK the opposite of διακρίνεται is συμμίσγεται. Burnet (1911) 49 speaks of “the early natural philosophers” and fails to mention Anaxagoras. Epich. B9 DK is of dubious authenticity; all the other instances cited in Kranz’ index (also for the nouns) are in A-fragments or from the context of B-fragments in the quoting source authors. Eur. fr. 839 Nauck³ (printed at Anaxag. fr. A112 DK) is believed to be influenced by Anaxagoras; here διακρινόμενον is at line 16. [Hipp.] *Septtr. part.* [sp.] is still later, i.e. post-Democritean, possibly even much later, see Grensemann (1968) 127-8. Here we find σκήνος συγκρίνεται at p. 122.18 Grensemann; cf. *ibid.* 134.9, 124.17.

²⁹ They became part of Plato’s standard vocabulary, though at *Sph.* 243B (διακρίσεις καὶ συγκρίσεις) the reference is still to earlier views.

away, had become a central one since at least Parmenides. The διὰ τί question³⁰ subsequently became one of the four types of questions to be put when practicing research which were stipulated by Aristotle (who calls it the διότι question). Aristotle's method was taken over by the authors of doxographies and numerous others.³¹

Plato begins with a single example concerned with the issue of the origin of living beings (τὰ ζῷα συστρέφεται) from the putrefaction of the opposites hot and cold (*Phd.* 92A);³² this pertains to zoogony as part of cosmogony. These living beings, I believe, are also included in the investigation regarding the 'perishings of these things' (92B). Περὶ ζώων γενέσεως is of course the title (quoted by Galen, Alexander, Olympiodorus, Simplicius, and by Apuleius *Apol.* 36³³ both in translation and in the original Greek) of a treatise by Aristotle, which however is not about the origin of ζῷα in the beginning, since he believes the cosmos to be eternal. Origin not from copulation but from putrefaction is limited by Aristotle to certain groups of bloodless animals and certain kinds of plants.³⁴ There is no dialectical diaeresis of contrasting views at the start of this work, but an origin of ζῷα in the beginning is rejected in an off-hand manner later on.³⁵ Theophrastus is said to have argued³⁶ in favour of the eternity of the cosmos by refuting among other things the view that 'living beings on land perish species by species', but this general point is to some extent modified in what follows in Philo, the emphasis there being on one species only, humans, though the others are clearly coinvolved.³⁷

Περὶ ζώων γενέσεως, πῶς ἐγένοντο ζῷα, καὶ εἰ φθαρτά is the heading of ps.Plut./Aëtius 5.19 Diels,³⁸ a chapter beginning with the statement that those who hold that the cosmos has come into being believe the ζῷα to be γενητὰ ... καὶ φθαρτά. This is one half of the *diaphonia*, or stalemate concerned with both sides of an issue typical of doxographies of the Aëtian

³⁰ Not often found in Plato, and not topical.

³¹ Arist. *APo.* II.1.89b24-35. See Mansfeld (1990) 3193-3208, (1992) 70-93, (1998) 21-2. Three examples of διὰ τί at the beginning of short titles in ps.Plutarch/Aëtius, viz. 5.9, 5.14, 5.18, one in the second colon of a long title, viz. 2.26 Diels.

³² Attribution to Archelaus is unconvincing; see Burnet (1911) 100 and Loriaux (1975) 70, who base themselves on evidence purportedly deriving from Theophrastus.

³³ Apuleius also mentions Theophrastus (~ fr. 351 FHS&G) and other early Peripatetics; the title is not attested for the Eresian elsewhere, but this does not entail that Apuleius is mistaken. Nothing further is known about this purportedly Theophrastean treatise.

³⁴ GA I.1.715a24-5, b26-30, III.11.762a8-63b16.

³⁵ GA I.18.722b19-22, III.11.762b27-3a4. More attention, for instance, is paid to the pan-genesis theory and to the contribution of each parent at I.17.721b9-18.723b3. The first chapter of book four contains a detailed discussion of various views about the origin of sex-differentiation.

³⁶ *Ap. Philo Aet.* 117 (~ Thphr. *Phys. op.* fr. 12 Diels, 184 FHS&G; my transl.) Sedley (1998a) 345 argues that the substance of *Aet.* 117-49 derives from the *Physikai doxai*, but I am not entirely convinced (though I agree it is Theophrastean).

³⁷ *Aet.* 145-9; see further Sedley (1998a) 333-9.

³⁸ The corresponding section in Stobaeus has been lost (see below n. 41).

type.³⁹ The chapter contains four tenets which are arranged diaphonically. The first pair clearly are about the eternity of living beings, the second pair about their coming into being in the beginning. None of the latter corresponds to the example given by ‘Socrates’.⁴⁰ If in Aëtius the heading was originally short, it will have been *Περὶ ζώων γενέσεως*.⁴¹ A quite full account of contrasting views—though limited to one animal species only, viz. humans—is found at Censorinus *DN* 4, which via Varro presumably goes back to an *uberior fons* predating Aëtius. However the history of the doxography concerned with these particular questions is too complicated to be set out here. A direct link of the detailed accounts in Aëtius and Varro/Censorinus with Theophrastus and Aristotle cannot, apparently, be established, though Varro/Censorinus is close to Philo’s version of Theophrastus’ argument. This lack of feasibility holds *a fortiori* for any link with Plato. The only thing that is shared is the topic, which Plato however formulates in a different way.

2.1 What we think with

The view that thought and perception are produced by a blending of the elements constituting the body (above § 1) is of course only found with the Presocratic pluralists. Monists holding a similar view argued that it is the single element which is responsible for these epiphenomena. We may observe that cognitive monism is in some way simpler than the pluralist variety, which maybe helps to explain why Plato treats it more briefly. Plato also knew this other variety, which serves him as ‘Socrates’ next example after that concerned with the origin of life, so the issue of thought (central in the *Phaedo*) follows upon that of life (equally central in the *Phaedo*). The sequence according to Plato’s agenda is different from that in Aëtius, where soul as the agent of thought is discussed in book four and the origin of life in book five.

The passage runs as follows:

Do we think-and-perceive (φρονοῦμεν) with blood, or air, or fire, or none of these, and does the brain provide our senses of hearing and sight and smell, from which come memory and opinion, and from memory and opinion which

³⁹ See Runia (1989), (1992), (1997), Mansfeld (1989), (1990), (1992), (1996), Mansfeld and Runia (1997) xix, 191.

⁴⁰ ‘Socrates’ reference is attributed on insufficient grounds to Empedocles and Archelaus at fr. A76 DK (*Phd.* 96A6-B5). The Aëtian lemma with the name-label Empedocles at ps.Plu. 5.19.5 Diels does not mention putrefaction.

⁴¹ For the issue of short v. long headings in Aëtius see Mansfeld and Runia (1997) 127, 137, 143, 158, 180-1, and Mansfeld (2000) § 3, §§ 5-6. For Stob. 1.42 see above n. 38; all that survives is a quotation from Plato’s *Timaeus* not paralleled in ps.Plutarch. The index in Photius gives as its heading *Περὶ τῆς τῶν ζώων γενέσεως καὶ τὰ ἐξῆς*, which seems to point to a short Aëtian title; in this case too Stobaeus will have coalesced several Aëtian chapters. Wachsmuth (see his note *ad loc.*) prints *Περὶ τῆς τῶν ζώων γενέσεως*.

has become stable, comes knowledge?⁴² —Then again I investigated the perishings of these

The first phrase at its beginning is both about what came to be called the 'substance' of the soul,⁴³ and about what came to be called its *hègemonikon*, or regent part.⁴⁴ But note that Plato here is neither explicit about the *soul* nor about its thinking and sensing *part*. Aristotle among other substances which constitute the soul according to his predecessors mentions air and blood,⁴⁵ but in the *De anima* fails to speak of purported role of the brain. The doxographies attribute the tenet about the brain as the location of the *hègemonikon* to Hippocrates,⁴⁶ or to Hippocrates and Plato. From Plato's wording it would seem that he has Alcmeon in mind, whose view about the brain and the senses is analysed by Theophrastus.⁴⁷ Diels attributed the section about perception, memory and opinion to Alcmeon as well,⁴⁸ but the details of this cognitive process are not paralleled in Theophrastus or in other reports about the Crotoniate. The author of *Sacred Disease*, to be sure, says that 'as long as the brain is stable the human being is in his right mind' (φρονεῖ, i.e. thinks and perceives correctly, and has the appropriate emotions),⁴⁹ but there is no precise parallel in Theophrastus' account of Alcmeon, and Hippocrates (or [Hippocrates]) is far from analysing the process of cognition the way 'Socrates' does. The closest parallels are to be found in later Platonic dialogues,⁵⁰ so it would seem that Plato's 'Socrates' hints at a view that awaited working out.

Although there is a feeble opposition here between the elements and the brain as the instruments of thought and perception, I believe that it would be going too far if one were to postulate a diaeresis.⁵¹ Blood, air, fire and the brain are all corporeal. Memory (think of the *anamnèsis* doctrine) and

⁴² *Phd.* 96B, transl. Grube (modified). Quoted again Stob. I.51.6.

⁴³ Aët. 4.2-3 Diels, more specifically 4.3: air at 4.3.2 and 8, fire at 4.3.4. and 7; for the doxographic parallels see Mansfeld (1990) 3072-83. 3118-20, 3127-8. For blood see Thdrt. V.18 and the parallel passages listed *ibid.* 3077 with n. 74, 3211.

⁴⁴ Aët. 4.5.1 Diels, more specifically the parallel in Thdrt. V.22 for Aët. 4.5.1 (for the name-labels see below, text to n. 46); see Mansfeld (1990) 3093; further doxographic parallels *ibid.* 3100, 3105, 3127.

⁴⁵ *An.* I.2.405a21-b10, still on the soul as the principle of motion and knowledge.

⁴⁶ See *Morb. Sacr.* chs. 17 and 20, on the brain as the seat of thought (or understanding), perceptions and emotions. I see no reason to doubt that the *placita* lemmas which mention Hippocrates on the brain pertain to this treatise.

⁴⁷ *Sens.* 25-6.

⁴⁸ A11 DK, 1st text.

⁴⁹ Nevertheless this phrase is printed as Alcmeon fr. A11 DK, 2nd text.

⁵⁰ *Tht.* 194D, *Phlb.* 38B; also cf. Loriaux (1975) 71. The process as described by Aristotle enumerates four stages of which only the first two are also found in Plato, viz. perception, memory, experience and art/knowledge, e.g. *APo.* II.19.100a4-10 (referred to at Alcmeon fr. A11 DK *ad finem*). Plato's view is worked out at Alcmeon *Did.* ch. 4, and used e.g. Plu. *An. in Tim.* 1025A.

⁵¹ Alcmeon according to Theophrastus' report (above n. 47) distinguished between sensation (animals) and sensation-cum-understanding (humans) but this distinction is not taken up by Plato here; cf. Loriaux (1975) 71.

opinion, presumably, are not, but this is not said in so many words. Their real nature is left in the dark. Nevertheless there is a hint here of the explicit contrast, encountered later in Aristotle and the doxographies, between the view which holds that the soul is a corporeal entity and the opposite view that it is incorporeal⁵²—and Plato's own view elsewhere in the *Phaedo* of course is that it really is incorporeal, or comes close to being incorporeal.⁵³ But one needs this context, that is to say an interpretative combination of various passages in the dialogue dealing with 'what we think with' to construct such a diaeresis of corporeal v. incorporeal.

2.2 *Cosmology and Anaxagoras*

The next item on 'Socrates' list of issues is 'what happens to the things on earth and in the sky' (*Phd.* 96B-C). This is formulated in a very general way, no individual tenets being mentioned. But 'Socrates' will be more explicit later on; see below.

An interlude follows in which he states that his studies led to his being utterly confused. He even was at a loss to understand what he believed he had understood previously, viz. how people grow bigger (*Phd.* 96C-D). For formerly he had thought that this came about because of eating and drinking, food adding flesh to flesh and bones to bones, and so on. One should point out that this is by no means an innocuous idea. On the contrary, it exactly corresponds to Anaxagoras' theory of growth.⁵⁴ What seems to be implied is that Anaxagoras' view is a common-sense one which one may find out for oneself without having read his work, and that options offered by other early philosophers of nature are different, the result being a logjam. Still, this passage too (like those at 71B and 72C discussed above, § 2 *ad init.*) prepares the reader for the discussion of Anaxagoras' doctrine which is to follow.

I skip the puzzles about greater and smaller at *Phd.* 96D-97B in order to turn immediately to the subsequent account of Anaxagoras, which is interspersed with sets of various tenets concerned with specific issues.⁵⁵ Little needs to be said about the well-known expectations of 'Socrates' and his equally well-known disappointment when he found out that Anaxagoras who stated that Intellect arranges all things in the cosmos, failed to apply this insight by setting out a teleological cosmogony and cosmology based on divine intentionality and final causation down to the details. 'Socrates' makes it clear that he, for his part, is alas unable to supply teleological ex-

⁵² *An.* I.2.404b30-1; *Aët.* 4.2-3 Diels etc., see Mansfeld (1990) 3065-85, 3118, 3120, 3127-8, 3138, 3210.

⁵³ *Phd.* 79B-E, though the term ἀσώματον is not used.

⁵⁴ *Fr.* B10 DK; Loriaux (1975) 72-3.

⁵⁵ Preliminary remarks on the *doxai* concerning the earth at Mansfeld (1992) 94 n. 123.

planations that are valid for the philosophy of nature.⁵⁶ That is why he says he embarked on his 'roundabout route' to find out what it is to be a cause of something (*Phd.* 99C). Readers of the *Phaedo* have to wait for the account to be given in the *Timaeus*. Even so, Simplicius appositely points out (*in Phys.* 177.9-16) that this critique (ὅπερ ... ὁ ἐν τῷ Φαίδωνι Σωκράτης ἐγκαλεῖ τῷ Ἀναξαγόρῳ) is inappropriate where physics is concerned, and that moreover Plato himself in the *Timaeus*, making varieties of bulk and shape the causes of hotness and coldness etc., fails to provide teleological explanations of the details (ἐν τοῖς κατὰ μέρος).⁵⁷

The first conundrum of which 'Socrates' had expected to find a teleological solution in Anaxagoras' book has to do with the earth. He lists two issues, the first being concerned with its shape and the second with its position (*Phd.* 97D-E). These issues (and several others) are also discussed, at far greater length and in far greater detail, in chapter thirteen of the second book of Aristotle's *De caelo*, and in the doxographical tradition: in Cicero's *Lucullus* 122-3 where among other things the position of the earth is discussed, as well as at Aët. 3.10 περὶ σχήματος γῆς, on the shape of the earth, and 3.11 Diels περὶ θέσεως γῆς, on its position (ps.Plu. 895DE only, the corresponding sections in Stobaeus having been lost). I have argued elsewhere that Cicero and Aëtius ultimately depend on Aristotle's extensive and detailed discussion,⁵⁸ and do not feel bound to repeat this argument here. I translate the Plato passage:

I expected that he [viz., Anaxagoras] would tell me, first, whether the earth is flat or round, and then would go on to explain the cause and necessity thereof, telling (me) about what (should be) better [...], and that, if he were to say that it was in the middle (of the cosmos), he would go on to explain that it was better for it to be in the middle [...]

Ps.Plu./Aët. 3.10 Diels, a short chapter (the lost section in Stobaeus undoubtedly will have been more extensive) opposes sphericity to several varieties of flatness, some of which involve a kind of compromise view between being round and being flat. Ps.Plu./Aët. 3.11 Diels, an equally short chapter, opposes the earth's position in the middle (attributed to Thales (!) and his followers, 3.11.1), of which no further explanation is provided, to other views according to which there either is no middle at all (Xenophanes), or the earth does not occupy the central position. As to the earth's shape Plato only lists the two main contrasting points of view; this really is a diaeresis. He is not explicit about a view, or views, contrary to the assumption that the earth is in the middle, but likely enough implies that such views could be cited. Cic. *Luc.* 122, like Aëtius, opposes the (Xenophanean) view that there is no middle to the tenet which puts the earth at the centre, but

⁵⁶ Sedley (1998b) 125-6.

⁵⁷ Simpl. *in Phys.* 177.9-16, discussing one of the verbatim fragments of Anaxagoras.

⁵⁸ Mansfeld (1992) 94-109, *ubi vide* for further parallels.

declines to speak of the shape of the earth. We may conclude that what is in Plato anticipates several points of the dialectical discussion in Aristotle as well as in the *diaphoniai* to be found in the doxographies.

'Socrates' continues by stating (*Phd.* 98A):

In the same way, I was ready to find out about the sun and the moon and the other heavenly bodies, and about their relative speed, their turnings and whatever else happens to them, (viz.) how it is best that each should act or be acted upon.

No individual tenets are listed. The shape and position of the sun, the moon and the other heavenly bodies are clearly included among the objects of this purported enquiry. These are topics that are explicitly treated in the second book of Aëtius, where we also find chapters concerned with the motions of the heavenly bodies, with the turnings of the sun and of the moon, and with other phenomena connected with stars, sun and moon.⁵⁹ Plato's rapid overview much resembles Aristotle's summary statement at *Phys.* II.2.193b26-31, where their relative speed, turnings and whatever else happens to them are called their attributes (my italics):

It seems absurd that the philosopher of nature should know what the sun or moon is but should not know any of their *attributes* per se, particularly because those who (write) about nature obviously speak of the shape of the sun as well as of the moon, and devote special attention (to the question) whether the earth and the cosmos are spherical or not.

Elsewhere Aristotle of course deals with these questions, especially in the *De caelo* (where at II.13 his treatment of the earth is the most extensive, an issue to which, as we have seen and shall see, Plato in the *Phaedo* devotes particular attention too). In the *Timaeus* Plato will treat astronomical matters in extensive detail, and emphatically bring in Intellect and the good as causes. But here, in the *Phaedo*, 'Socrates' is very brief and so to speak merely dismisses the astronomical views of the early philosophers, in particular those of Anaxagoras. For Anaxagoras had failed to let Intellect play its proper part or to introduce final causes, and only spoke of 'airs and aethers and waters and many other odd things' (*Phd.* 98B-C).

A little later 'Socrates' returns to the issues of the shape and position of the earth (*Phd.* 99B), now focusing on two mechanistic explanations for its being at rest that have been provided by others (no names, again). His critique is that in this way only conflicting *conditiones sine quibus non* are provided, not a definitely acceptable final cause, and so implies that it is impossible to choose from them:

⁵⁹ Aët. 2.13-30 Diels (too long to quote in detail), in the order stars/sun/moon; the complicated ch. 31 (on which see Mansfeld (2000)) is concerned with the distances of the sun and moon from the earth and from each other, and of that of the earth from the outer heaven.

One person surrounds the earth with a whirl so that the heavens keep it at rest, another puts the air underneath to support it as if it were a kneading-trough.

We may note that if the earth is like a ‘kneading-trough’ it must be flat, or flattish.⁶⁰ These two alternatives are also to be found (though not together) in Arist. *Cael.* II.13.⁶¹ At 294b13-6 Anaximenes, Anaxagoras and Democritus are said to hold that the earth covers the air underneath it like a kneading-trough (or lid) and so does not cut through it, but remains where it is. This is paralleled in a very short Aëtian lemma about Anaximenes which (together with parts of other lemmas)⁶² has ended up in ps.Plutarch’s chapter on earthquakes, 3.15.8 Diels (corresponding section in Stobaeus lost, with the exception of the Plato lemma at 15.10): ‘Αναξιμένης διὰ τὸ πλάτος ἐποχεῖσθαι (*scil.* τὴν γῆν) τῷ ἀέρι. This lemma is not about earthquakes at all, so perhaps they were epitomized away by ps.Plutarch.⁶³ Next, at 295a16-22, Aristotle mentions ‘Empedocles and others’, who in order to explain why the earth is at rest appealed to the whirl produced by the motion of the heavens swinging around the earth.⁶⁴ To the best of my knowledge this tenet is not paralleled in the *Placita* literature.

2.3 Dialectical discussion before Aristotle

There is more. In a later section of the *Phaedo*, that is to say in the story told by ‘Socrates’ about the real world, and about its innards to be visited by the souls that have left the body, he states his own view about the shape and position of the earth. This is presented as a strong belief, a personal conviction, not as a piece of knowledge (108D-E, τὴν ... ἰδέαν τῆς γῆς οἶον πέπεισμαι εἶναι).⁶⁵ What he believes, or presupposes, is that the earth is (1) in the middle of the heavens, and (2) that it is round (108E-109A). So in actual fact ‘Socrates’ makes his own choice (in inverse order) from the available options listed at *Phd.* 97D-E.

This proceeding may be called *dialectical* in the Aristotelian sense of the word, for it is Aristotle’s well-known practice, in the dialectical discussion of a problem in physics or ethics, to list and discuss the available or even possible options and to go on from there by stating, arguing and further developing his own preferred position.

⁶⁰ The mss. reading καρδόπω is defended by Loriaux (1975) 85-6 and kept by Rowe (1993).

⁶¹ Duly pointed out in the commentaries.

⁶² See next note.

⁶³ Ps.Plut./Aët. 3.15, though entitled περὶ σεισμῶν γῆς, is not only about earthquakes, i.e. movements of parts of the earth, but in some lemmas also about the motion v. rest of the earth as a whole, viz. at 3.15.6-10. This is information one would expect to find in Aët. 3.12 Diels.

⁶⁴ ~ Emp. fr. A67 DK, but the Aristotelian sentence where the word δίνη occurs is omitted. In the verbatim fragments the δίνη is mentioned once, at fr. B35.4 DK which is about cosmogony. Presumably the rotation of the heavens is a continuation of this primordial whirl. Also compare B115.11 DK, αἰθέρος δίνηαις.

⁶⁵ Furley (1989) 18.

'Socrates' too provides an argument in favour of his choice. Although this does not satisfy the claim for a teleological explanation concerned with the 'good' made in the section criticizing Anaxagoras (which is why it can only be a conviction, not a piece of knowledge), it is quite satisfactory, since it appeals to what we are wont to call the principle of sufficient reason.⁶⁶ It moreover so to speak kills two birds with a single stone, since it accounts both for the sphericity of the earth and for its central position.

'Socrates' accomplishes this *tour de force* by appealing to two subsidiary assumptions (109A),⁶⁷ viz. that 'the heaven is equiform on all sides' (τὴν ὁμοιότητα τοῦ οὐρανοῦ αὐτοῦ ἑαυτῷ παντὶ) and that 'the earth is in a state of equipoise', or 'balance' (ἰσορροπία). Both the heaven and the earth are equiform,⁶⁸ and therefore round:

For something balanced in the middle of something equiform will have no reason to *incline* (κλιθῆναι) this way rather than that way in any direction but will be *at rest* (μενεῖ) in a state of equiformity without any inclination (my italics).

Accordingly the earth will 'have no need of air or any other forcible constraint to keep it from falling' (108E). We may recall that this role of air has been mentioned, and rejected, by 'Socrates' before, at *Phd.* 99B, where moreover another 'forcible constraint' is exemplified by the cosmic whirl.

These subsidiary reasons may be rewardingly compared with the themes of the two Aëtian chapters (again ps.Plutarch only) following upon those mentioned above, viz. 3.12 περὶ ἐγκλίσεως γῆς, on the earth's inclination (the possibility of its not being inclined is not mentioned, but this may be due to the fact that ps.Plutarch is an epitome), and 3.13 περὶ κινήσεως γῆς, on its being moved or at rest. Aristotle too, in the chapter of the *De caelo* mentioned several times above, dwells on the question whether the earth τῶν ἡρεμούντων ἐστὶν ἢ τῶν κινουμένων (II.13.283a16), and he lists the relevant tenets at considerable length. But he does not discuss the earth's inclination.

The argument based on the notion of sufficient reason, viz. that based on equiformity and equipoise, is also known from elsewhere. Aristotle in the *De caelo* chapter I now probably have cited *ad satietatem* attributes it to 'Anaximander and others', *Cael.* II.13.295b11-6. Is it too daring to include Plato's Socrates among these 'others' and to grant Aristotle his own way of formulating the explanation? In Aëtius' chapter on earthquakes⁶⁹ (3.15.7 Diels) this doctrine is attributed to Parmenides and Democritus, but other evidence in support of this unlikely ascription is lacking.

⁶⁶ Furley (1989) 17, 24-6 (on precedent in Parmenides).

⁶⁷ Discussed at some length by Loriaux (1975) 135-8; better Rowe (1993) 271-2, *ubi vide* for further references.

⁶⁸ Rowe (1993) 272.

⁶⁹ See above, n. 63.

3. Conclusion

From this overview we have learned, or so I believe, that Aristotle's dialectical method is to some extent prefigured in the *Phaedo*. Naturally this is a case of insight by hindsight. We have also seen that the two main 'dialectical' points made in the *Phaedo* were taken up in an abundant way by Aristotle: the discussion about the nature of the soul in the *De anima*, esp. in chapters two and four of the first book, and that about the position, shape and stability of the earth in chapter thirteen of the second book of the *De Caelo*. It is not to be excluded that Aristotle gave special attention to these particular issues because he was impressed by Plato's *Vorbild* in the famous dialogue where for the first time views of early physicists explicitly play an important part. But the differences between Plato's and Aristotle's discussions should not be overlooked. Aristotle is explicit about the *formal* aspect, that is to say, e.g., about the diaereses and about the categories (substance, place etc.) to which the types of questions pertain, and his examples are as a rule far more numerous so that his procedure resembles an induction. His dialectic is systematic, and follows certain well-defined rules. His critical evaluations too are far more extensive and detailed than Plato's, and (as he believes) result in knowledge, not in a mere personal conviction.

Neither Plato nor Aristotle are doxographers, though it is obvious that their expositions could be used by doxographers, and were used by doxographers. I have argued elsewhere that Aristotle's influence on the later doxographies cannot be overestimated, and that Theophrastus' role in further shaping the tradition, though presumably important, is difficult to gauge for lack of evidence.⁷⁰ It is furthermore clear that much must have happened in the centuries that lie between the early Peripatetics and the immediate predecessor(s) of Aëtius' *Placita*. On the other hand, it is entirely likely that Plato not only excerpted the original works, but also depended on earlier secondary sources. Hippias compiled lists, or overviews, of similar views, that is to say parallel views dealing with the same topic, and Gorgias did so too, but emphasized that such tenets are (or may be) incompatible with each other.⁷¹ It does not matter now whether lists dealing in this manner with the soul, or with the earth etc., were already current. What is important are the *methods* of listing, comparing and opposing tenets concerned with particular topics, and it is clear, at least in my view, that Plato gratefully availed himself of this technique.

⁷⁰ See my papers cited above, n. 39.

⁷¹ See Mansfeld (1986), where the influence of Hippias and Gorgias on Plato and Aristotle is studied.

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CHAPTER TWO
PARMENIDES AND PLATO ON WHAT IS NOT

DENIS O'BRIEN

Introduction

Plato, in writing the *Sophist*, “did not consider it beneath his dignity to return to the great Parmenides”.¹ Any reader of Plato’s dialogue must therefore do likewise. But whose Parmenides should we return to? If modern interpretations of the *Sophist* are legion, so too are the reconstructions that are currently on offer, from modern scholars, of the fragments of Parmenides. Which one should we take on board?

Two names in particular stand out. Miss G. E. M. Anscombe was a close associate of Wittgenstein, and is generally acknowledged as one of the leading philosophers of her day. Professor W. K. C. Guthrie was a pupil of F. M. Cornford, and is the only historian of ancient philosophy who has had both the knowledge and the ambition to undertake a history of Greek philosophy that would rival the great work of Eduard Zeller.² Both scholars therefore have impeccable credentials. Both have written on Parmenides.³ One or other or both, one might surely think, will have been able to recover from the extant fragments ideas that will make sense of the criticisms of Parmenides that loom so large in Plato’s *Sophist*.

Ladies first, so I start with Miss Anscombe.⁴

¹ De Rijk (1986) 75. Cf. de Rijk (1983). It is a pleasure and an honour to include this essay in a volume dedicated to Professor de Rijk. I am most grateful to my brother Patrick O’Brien and to the two editors of the volume for very kindly reading and correcting an earlier version of my contribution.

² See Guthrie (1962-1981). Sadly, Guthrie did not live to complete his majestic enterprise; the last volume takes us only as far as Aristotle. Cf. Zeller (1844) and (1919-1920). Gomperz (1896-1909) is too chatty to be a serious rival.

³ Guthrie (1965) 1-80. Anscombe (1969), reprinted in Anscombe (1981) 3-8. Cf. O’Brien (1987) 206 n. 25. Miss Anscombe goes so far as to entitle the first volume of her *Collected papers* (1981) *From Parmenides to Wittgenstein*. Obviously therefore she does not consider her contribution on Parmenides to be a mere *παρεργον*.

⁴ The references which follow will be to Anscombe (1969); see the footnote preceding this. In the *Introduction* to her *Collected papers*, (1981) vii-xi, Miss Anscombe has obviously taken a fresh look both at the fragments of Parmenides and at the text of Plato’s *Sophist*. But since she reprints her article of 1969, without correction, as the first item in the volume (Anscombe [1981] 3-8), I hope it will not be unfair of me to restrict my initial remarks to Miss Anscombe’s

Part one

§ I

As befits a modern philosopher, Miss Anscombe begins her analysis by recasting Parmenides' 'argument' in a form which approximates to that of a syllogism.⁵ The major premiss: 'It is the same thing that can be thought and can be.' The minor premiss: 'What is not can't be.' The conclusion: 'What is not can't be thought.'⁶

The syllogism, or would-be syllogism, meets with immediate disapproval. Parmenides' 'argument', as stated,

is valid only if the second premiss is taken *in sensu diviso*. But it has no credibility except *in sensu composito*. The conclusion is also incredible.⁷

So it may well be. But before we join Miss Anscombe in her triumphant demonstration that Parmenides' 'argument' is invalid, incredible and even really rather ridiculous, is it too pedantic to ask just where Miss Anscombe's seeming syllogism has come from? For strangely enough, and contrary to all the conventions of modern scholarship, the pages printed under Miss Anscombe's name in the *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society* contain not a single reference to the texts she purports to comment upon.

Where then, in the hundred and fifty or so verses or part-verses surviving from the poem of Parmenides,—where, in the twenty pages or more given over to a criticism of Parmenides' ideas in Plato's *Sophist*,—where, in the many, many allusions to Parmenides to be found in the writings of ancient philosophers from Aristotle to Simplicius,—where, in all this wealth of material, is there to be found the 'argument' with which Miss Anscombe adorns the opening of her article?

Answer: nowhere.

§ II

The various ingredients in Miss Anscombe's reconstruction of Parmenides' argument do of course have a Parmenidean flavour. The nearest we come to the actual quotation of a fragment is in the major premiss. "It is the same

original piece, and to leave aside, for the moment, the second thoughts (and retractations?) to which she gives voice in her *Introduction*. My self-imposed austerity will come to an end at § xvi below. See also the footnote placed at the end of § xxix.

⁵ Anscombe (1969) 125. I am most grateful to Suzanne Stern-Gillet for having kindly thrown light on several points in Miss Anscombe's article that I would otherwise have found obscure.

⁶ Anscombe, (1969) 125, in fact writes, not of a 'minor' premiss, but of a 'second' premiss. Is this perhaps a silent acknowledgement that the 'argument', despite being set out as a syllogism (each of the two premisses is printed on a separate line, and the conclusion, again printed on a separate line, is preceded by the sign $\therefore$), does not properly follow the form of a syllogism?

⁷ Anscombe (1969) 125.

thing that can be thought and can be" is a direct transcription of the translation that Burnet had given of fr. 3, shorn only of its introductory particle ('for').⁸

Unfortunately for Miss Anscombe, Burnet's translation is at this point hardly more than a paraphrase. In particular, anyone who reads the fragment in the Greek (τὸ γὰρ αὐτὸ νοεῖν ἐστὶν τε καὶ εἶναι) will have trouble in locating the two modal expressions which appear in the English ('can') and which are essential to the link between major and minor premiss in Miss Anscombe's reconstruction of Parmenides' argument.⁹

Admittedly, the meaning of the fragment, even in Greek, is not immediately obvious. The fragment is first recorded in the second century AD by Clement, in a context which, philosophically, is quite banal. (Parmenides' words remind Clement of a saying attributed to Aristophanes: "Thinking is as good as doing.") But, in the century following, Plotinus takes the fragment very seriously, as does Proclus, two hundred years later. Both Plotinus and Proclus quote (or refer to) the fragment more than once, and both take the meaning to be that 'thinking and being are the same'.¹⁰

Understood in this way, the fragment answers nicely to the Neoplatonic belief in the existence of an intelligible world, where the activity of Intellect ('thinking') and the objects of Intellect ('being') are held to be the two facets of a single substance, both of them produced at a single (non-temporal) moment, when an indeterminate other that has been produced from the One turns back towards the One.¹¹

Only the most hardened syncretist would want to foist such a meaning onto the historical Parmenides. Most likely, therefore, Plotinus and Proclus have understood the fragment in the way they do, because they have failed to recognise the Homeric syntax, whereby the object of the first infinitive becomes the subject of the second.¹²

⁸ Burnet, (1930) 173: 'It is the same thing that can be thought and that can be.' (I write of a 'direct transcription' although Miss Anscombe has in fact omitted the second *that*.) Here and throughout I give the numbering of the fragments that has been in common use since Kranz's fifth edition of Diels' *Fragmente der Vorsokratiker*; see Diels and Kranz (1934) 227-46. Burnet, writing in 1930, still gives the numbering that appeared in Diels' fourth edition; see Diels (1922) 147-64. For my own attempted reconstruction of the sequence of fragments in the original poem, see O'Brien (1987) 239-52.

⁹ For the text and sources of the fragment, see O'Brien (1987) 19-20. In defence of Burnet, let it be said at once that 'can' is perhaps justifiable as a mere translator's prop, designed to get around the difficulty of translating a peculiarly Greek use of the infinitive, here as in fr. 2.1-2 (on this pair of verses, see § XXIII below). My point is that 'can', in Burnet's translation of fr. 3, is not, as Miss Anscombe's use of the fragment would require, a full-blown use of modal 'can', on a par with the expressions of impossibility and necessity present in the opening statement of Parmenides' two ways (fr. 2.3 and 5; see § v below).

¹⁰ For references to Clement, Plotinus and Proclus, see again O'Brien (1987) 19-20. For Clement's quotation from Aristophanes, see *Stromateis* VI, ii 23.2 (ii 440.10 ed. Stählin).

¹¹ For details, see O'Brien (1997).

¹² See Monro (1891) 196-8 (§ 231), quoted by O'Brien, (1987) 20.

Construed in this way, the fragment will have a quite different meaning from the meaning it has in the *Enneads* or in Proclus' commentary on Plato's *Parmenides*. We shall have to translate, very awkwardly: 'There is the same thing for thinking of ('the same thing' is here taken as the *object* of the first infinitive, νοεῖν) as for being ('the same thing' now becomes the *subject* of the second infinitive, εἶναι).' A sentence which, to be even barely tolerable in English, will have to be re-cast as: 'There is the same thing for being thought and for being.'

§ III

This way of treating a pair of infinitives is still to be found in Aristotle, but would have been unfamiliar to Greeks of the third century AD and later, especially when a simpler syntax gave a meaning which, philosophically, so exactly fitted their own doctrinal preoccupations. Even for a modern reader, Aristotle's use of the construction is perhaps sufficiently unusual to call for comment.

In his criticism of Plato, Aristotle writes, *Phys.* viii 1, 251b19-20: ἀδύνατόν ἐστιν καὶ εἶναι καὶ νοῆσαι χρόνον ἄνευ τοῦ νῦν. Aristotle's meaning is undoubtedly: "It is impossible both for time to be, and for time to be thought of, without the 'now'."¹³ Exactly as in the fragment attributed to Parmenides, the object of the one infinitive has here to be taken as subject of the other, with the purely accidental difference (from a grammatical, not from a philosophical, point of view) that Aristotle writes first of *being* and secondly of *thinking*, while the goddess of Parmenides takes the two terms in the opposite order (she speaks first of *thinking*, and secondly of *being*).¹⁴

An example which Monro quotes from Homer shows the same inversion of subject and object. When Odysseus tries to persuade Achilles to return to the fray, he tells him, *Iliad* ix 230-1: ἐν δοιῇ δὲ σαωσέμεν ἢ ἀπολέσθαι νῆας ἔϋσσέλμους.¹⁵ In this pair of verses, 'ships' (νῆας) are the object of the first infinitive (σαωσέμεν), the subject of the second (ἀπολέσθαι). Leaf and Bayfield translate: "We are in doubt whether we shall save our ships, or whether they will be lost."¹⁶

¹³ For simplicity's sake, I have detached the quotation from its context, where the words quoted are preceded by εἰ οὖν, and form the first arm of a two-part protasis, designed to prove that the cosmos cannot have had a beginning in time.

¹⁴ There is also of course the difference that Aristotle's two infinitives (εἶναι and νοῆσαι) differ in tense, whereas Parmenides' two infinitives (νοεῖν and εἶναι) have the same tense. On this point, see the footnote placed at the end of this section.

¹⁵ Monro (1891) 196-8 (§ 231).

¹⁶ Leaf and Bayfield (1931) 458-9. Chantraine also translates with a repeated use of the future, (1953) 311 (§ 452): "*Nous nous demandons si nous sauverons nos nefs ou si elles périront.*" Since the second infinitive (ἀπολέσθαι) is an aorist, we might think to prefer the translation that Leaf had originally given, (1886) 298, repeated unchanged in (1900) 389: "We are in doubt whether we shall save our ships, or whether they are lost." But the point is of little consequence. "Verbs of *hoping, expecting, promising, swearing*, and a few others of like meaning"

Monro's explanation is that, in Homer, "the Infinitive is so far an *abstract Noun* that the action which it denotes is not predicated of an *agent*", with the result that the action can be seen to be performed either by the agent (with the agent as subject) or upon the agent (with the agent as object), the infinitive remaining, in both cases, in the active (or the middle) voice. Hence, in the pair of verses quoted from the *Iliad*, the ships are thought of, in turn, as the *object* of the action (it is the ships that are saved, not the ships that do the saving) and as the *subject* of the action (if the ships are not saved, they will perish).¹⁷

§ IV

To return to Parmenides, fr. 3. These examples from Homer and from Aristotle will, I much hope, serve to dispel the disquiet voiced by Professor de Rijk, when he writes of "the difficulty of taking the exegetical infinitive *voeîn* in the passive sense and *εἶναι* in the active".¹⁸

In the passages quoted from the *Iliad* and from Aristotle's *Physics*, each of the paired infinitives is active (or middle) in form, and therefore also

are regularly followed by a future or an aorist infinitive when referring to a future event. See Goodwin (1897) 45-6 (§ 136); cf. 28-31 (§§ 96-101). The opening expression *ἐν δοῦν*, counted as including some verbal element understood (*ἐστί* or possibly *ἐσμέν*), can presumably be grouped among verbs "of like meaning", in which case the 'loss' of the ships (as an event which, if it takes place at all, will take place in the future) can properly be expressed by an aorist no less than by a future infinitive. On the tense of *σῶσέμεν*, see the footnote following this.

¹⁷ See again Monro (1891) 196-8 (§ 231). I find Monro's explanation, which I have slightly elaborated upon, more helpful than the equivalent remarks in Chantraine, (1953) 303 (§ 444), where we are told merely that: "*L'infinitif déterminatif s'emploie avec une certaine liberté*", that: "*La souplesse de la syntaxe de l'infinitif a pour conséquence que la 'construction' n'est pas toujours évidente*", and finally, on our passage from the *Iliad*: "*Voir encore [...] un changement de sujet entre σῶσέμεν et ἀπολέσθαι*."—The tense of *σῶσέμεν* (*Il. ix 230*) remains uncertain. Is this a future infinitive, corresponding to *σάωσω*, or an aorist infinitive, corresponding to *ἐσάωσα*? Veitch, (1887) 582, gives the form as a future (*ad Il. xix 401*). Leaf disagrees, (1886) 298 (*Il. ix 230, ad loc.*): "It is a 'mixed' aor[ist] = *σῶσαι*, rather than future." In his second edition he writes more firmly still, (1900) 389 (on the same verse): "a mixed aor[ist], not a fut[ure]." See also Leaf (1888) 285, (1902) 346 (*ad Il. xix 401*). But he then backtracks. For in Leaf and Bayfield, (1931) 458-9 (*ad Il. ix 230*), we are told that *σῶσέμεν* is only "probably" an aorist. Curiously, there is the same dithering in Chantraine. In the first volume of his *Grammaire homérique* Chantraine is no less affirmative than Leaf had first been. He writes, (1942) 491 (§ 237): "*σῶσέμεν doit être non un futur mais un aoriste*." But ten years later, in his second volume, although referring explicitly to his earlier statement in volume one, Chantraine asks of the same infinitive, (1953) 311 (§ 452): "*S'agit-il d'un aoriste?*" The reference added in volume two to volume one leaves the reader in doubt as to whether Chantraine is owning up to an inconsistency, or has simply changed his mind.—The point is relevant to our discussion, only in so far as, if *σῶσέμεν* is a future, then our two infinitives, *σῶσέμεν* and *ἀπολέσθαι*, display a change of subject, voice and tense. Otherwise, we have a change only of subject and voice (since *ἀπολέσθαι* is an aorist). The structure of fr. 3 is more straightforward still, since the two infinitives (*voeîn* and *εἶναι*) have the same tense and voice, and differ only in the point that the object of the first infinitive (*voeîn*) is the subject of the second (*εἶναι*).

¹⁸ De Rijk (1983) 45 n. 63.

active (or middle) in meaning. The seeming anomaly lies solely in the point that the two infinitives have a different relationship to the same noun ('time' in Aristotle's text, 'ships' in the *Iliad*), which switches from being the subject of the first infinitive to being the object of the second (in Aristotle) or *vice versa* (in Homer and in Clement's quotation from Parmenides).

The point is quite simply that English here lacks the flexibility of the Greek. To translate Aristotle's passage, we can choose to repeat the noun: "It is impossible for time to be, it is impossible to think of time." Alternatively, if we wish to avoid the repetition, and to keep something of the succinctness of Aristotle's Greek, we have to change the active to a passive infinitive: "It is impossible alike for time to be and to be thought of..."¹⁹

Similarly, in the passage from Homer. We can follow Leaf in introducing a fresh subject for the first infinitive: "We are in doubt whether we shall save our ships, or whether they will be lost."²⁰ Alternatively, we avoid introducing any additional nouns from the context, and change the voice of the infinitive: "It is uncertain whether the ships will be saved, or will perish."

This latter solution (which has obvious advantages in the case of Parmenides, where the introduction of any fresh noun would open up a hornet's nest of controversy) is the result solely of our needing to translate the idiom of a highly inflected language (Greek) into a language with a quite different grammatical structure, where the syntactical function is more often than not expressed simply by the order of words in a sentence (as is the case in English). The need to substitute a passive for an active voice, in translating all three passages (from Homer, Parmenides and Aristotle), is typical of the many inevitable constraints imposed upon a translator, as he attempts to pass from one language to the other.

Yielding to the constraint does not in any way imply that the active use of the Greek infinitive carries in itself, so to speak, a passive meaning. Let me therefore reassure Professor de Rijk that, in Parmenides' fr. 3, both exegetical infinitives (νοῆσαι and εἶναι) retain an active sense, even if, merely to suite our modern idiom, one of them is translated by a passive voice in English.²¹

¹⁹ Perhaps more idiomatically: "It is impossible for time *either* to be *or* to be thought of..." The Oxford translators get around the difficulty by making 'time' the subject of the sentence. See Hardie and Gaye, (1930) *ad loc.*: "Time cannot exist and is unthinkable apart from the moment." I have no quarrel with this as giving Aristotle's meaning. But it is of course paraphrase, not translation. (In Aristotle's Greek 'time' is in the accusative case.)

²⁰ See again Leaf (1886) 298, (1900) 389, in the corrected version given by Leaf and Bayfield, (1931) 458-9.

²¹ In the note quoted at the beginning of this section, (1983) 45 n. 63, de Rijk also objects, to the construction adopted here for fr. 3, that "it seems most unlikely that an exegetical infinitive should be found *preceding* the *verbum finitum*". But this is what we find in the example quoted below, § xxiii, from *Iliad* xviii 258: ῥήτεροι πολέμειζεν ἦσαν Ἀχαιοί. The infinitive πολέμειζεν precedes ἦσαν, just as, in fr. 3, νοεῖν precedes ἐστί.—The pedant forever peering over my shoulder may object to my implication (shared by Professor de Rijk) that εἶναι is 'active' in meaning. Can a verb be 'active' in meaning if it has no passive? Anyone seriously

§ V

To return to Miss Anscombe. Neither of the two possible translations of fr. 3 (the Homeric and the Neoplatonic) yields any obvious modal meaning at all. Burnet has rightly seen that, in English, the first infinitive can properly be translated by a passive use of the verb; but his addition of the word ‘can’,²² in so far as it is not a mere translator’s prop, is the result solely of his following the opinion of editors of his day, who chose to tack Clement’s quotation onto the end of another, and longer, quotation from Parmenides, recorded by Proclus and by Simplicius. But was that in fact the context of the fragment? Impossible to say.²³

The preceding group of verses (fr. 2) does contain modal expressions. These are most simply translated by the notions of possibility (or impossibility) and necessity. The goddess who addresses Parmenides throughout the poem presents two “ways of enquiry”. The first is designated by the simple verb “is”, and the second by its negation “is not”. To the first of the two ways, the goddess adds: “and it is not possible not to be”. To the second of the two ways she adds: “and it is necessary not to be”.²⁴

Admittedly, Parmenides’ opening modal statement, fr. 2.3: οὐκ ἔστι μὴ εἶναι, “it is not possible not to be”, is frequently misconstrued. To quote only the two most recent translations, into French: Catherine Collobert and Barbara Cassin both eschew any modal meaning, Collobert by translating as “*ne pas être n’est pas*” and Cassin by translating (Box and Cox!) as “*n’est pas ne pas être*”.²⁵

Both ladies presumably hope to defend themselves from criticism by sticking to a word-for-word rendering of the Greek: οὐκ ἔστι, “*n’est pas*”, and μὴ εἶναι, “*ne pas être*”. But here, as so often, the defence is of little avail. The second way is accompanied by a modal statement, fr. 2.5: χρεών

worried by such a quibble is welcome to recast the argument in terms exclusively of subject and object. The verb εἶναι can have no object. The anomaly (or the flexibility, call it what you will) lies in the point that the subject of εἶναι has to be understood, not as the subject, but as the object of νοεῖν.

²² Burnet, (1930) 173: “It is the same thing that can be thought and that can be.” See § II above.

²³ Not only is it impossible to determine the context of the snippet quoted initially by Clement (see § II above); it seems to me a distinct possibility that Clement’s little aphorism is not a genuine fragment at all, but a mere abbreviated re-writing of fr. 8.34: ταὐτὸν δ’ ἐστὶ νοεῖν τε καὶ οὐνεκεν ἔστι νόημα, which I would translate as: “It is the same to think and our thinking that ‘is’.” (In this translation, the addition of ‘our’ is intended merely to help bring out, in English, the function of the ‘that’ which follows. The equivalent French translation runs: “*C’est une même chose que penser, et la pensée affirmant: ‘est’.*”) If I have given space to Miss Anscombe’s (hypothetical) use of the fragment, it is therefore merely *argumenti causa*. Personally, I would be very loth to base any serious attempt at reconstructing Parmenides’ ‘argument’ on those eight words, taken in isolation from other, better attested, fragments from the poem. See O’Brien (1987) 40 (translation of fr. 8.34), and *ibid.* 20 (doubts on the authenticity of fr. 3).

²⁴ See O’Brien (1987) 16-18.

²⁵ See Collobert (1993) 13; Cassin (1998) 77.

ἔστι μὴ εἶναι, "it is necessary not to be". It is highly unlikely that the same should not be true of first way.

The origin of this meaning of the verb (ἔστι, more often οὐκ ἔστι, followed by an infinitive, to mean "it is possible", "it is not possible") very likely lies in the use of the infinitive following verbs of intention or desire, where the action is necessarily envisaged as unrealised and therefore uncertain. With an impersonal use of ἔστι, and especially with the negative οὐκ ἔστι, the hypothetical nature of the action prevails. The whole idea is represented as something which not only may not, but which, in the case of the negative, cannot happen. For example, Achilles, boasting of his lineage, cries out, *Iliad* xxi 193: οὐκ ἔστι Διὶ Κρονίωνι μάχεσθαι. "There is no occasion when/it is not possible to engage in combat with Zeus, son of Cronos."²⁶

Failure to recognise the modal use of οὐκ ἔστι in fr. 2.3 I can only suspect springs from unfamiliarity with an idiom which is nonetheless recorded under a specific rubric in any dictionary worthy of the name, and which occurs more than fifty times in Homer and in the Homeric hymns, as listed by Ebeling.²⁷

§ VI

In these two modal statements of the first and the second way do we perhaps see the origin of Miss Anscombe's minor premiss: "What is not can't be"?

It is difficult to be sure. If we re-write Parmenides' fragment (a perilous proceeding, as we shall see), so as to have a 'personal' subject for the two modal expressions which in Greek are given in an 'impersonal' form, then presumably we would obtain, for the first way: 'what is cannot not be', and for the second way: 'what is not must not be'. Miss Anscombe's "What is not can't be" does not properly match either of these two statements. But should we perhaps nonetheless take Miss Anscombe's "What is not can't be" as a composite rendering of the two ways?

Is Miss Anscombe's "What is not can't be" an amalgam of the *subject* which we have added to the *second* way ('what is not') and of the *modal expression* which Parmenides attaches to the *first* way, with the infinitive that follows shorn of its negation (so that we have 'cannot be' instead of 'cannot not be')?

So violent an adaptation of the two ways would hardly be a promising start for anyone hoping to reconstruct Parmenides' philosophy from the extant fragments. But it is the best that I can do by way of tying Miss Anscombe's minor premiss to the text.

²⁶ I do no more than elaborate upon the ideas given by Chantaine, (1950) 302-5 (§ 443-6). Cf. O'Brien (1987) 161.

²⁷ See L. S. J., s.v. εἰμί [sum], A § vi; Ebeling, (1885) 360 (s.v. εἰμί [sum], § 4).

§ VII

But perhaps I am wrong. Miss Anscombe's modal expression ("can't be") does appear, although still in an impersonal form ("it is not possible"), in another fragment, which came later in the poem, where the opening two verses I believe should be translated (fr. 6.1-2): "It is necessary to say this, and to think this, namely that there is being; for it is possible to be, while it is not possible for nothing to be."²⁸

As in fr. 3, the construction of this sentence leaves itself open to more than one interpretation. The text of the manuscripts gives, fr. 6.1: *χρή τὸ λέγειν τὸ νοεῖν τ' ἐὼν ἔμμεναι*.²⁹ Professor de Rijk takes *ἐὼν* as the object of the two infinitives (*λέγειν* and *νοεῖν*) and gives *ἔμμεναι* a copulative meaning. His translation becomes: "It is right that one's (*τὸ*) asserting and thinking is <an assertion and thinking> of 'what is'."³⁰

With this translation, the construction of the Greek I take to be as follows: "It is right (*χρή*) that one's asserting and thinking (*τὸ λέγειν τὸ νοεῖν τε*) is (*ἔμμεναι*) an assertion and thinking (*sc. τὸ λέγειν τὸ νοεῖν τε*, repeated) of 'what is' (*ἐὼν*)." The repetition required by this reading of the fragment (the expression *τὸ λέγειν τὸ νοεῖν τε* has to be understood first as not having an object and then as having an object, the two occurrences linked by *ἔμμεναι*, although this word does not occur, in the Greek, until after the silent repetition of the phrase) gives pause for thought. Would it have been possible to grasp to complex a structure on a first, or even on a second, hearing of the poem?

To support his construction, de Rijk argues that Parmenides uses *ἔμμεναι* exclusively as a copula.³¹ This is true enough of the other two verses where Parmenides uses *ἔμμεν* (fr. 2.6) or *ἔμμεναι* (fr. 8.38). But since, in the surviving fragments, there are, in all, only three occurrences of the Homeric form, in various guises (*ἔμμεν*, *ἔμμεναι* and *ἔμμεναι*), as opposed to nearly a dozen occurrences of *εἶναι*, used both as a copula and as a complete predicate, how much weight can this argument have, statistically?³² A

²⁸ For the text and translation of these two verses, see O'Brien (1987) 24-7. For their position in the poem, see O'Brien (1987) 239-52.

²⁹ For the reading of the manuscripts (*τὸ λέγειν τὸ νοεῖν τ'*), see O'Brien (1987) 24. The text printed, as though from the manuscripts, in Diels and Kranz, (1951) 232 (fr. 6.1: *τὸ λέγειν τε νοεῖν τ'*), is in fact the text as corrected by Karsten. The error springs from Diels' edition of Simplicius' *Physics*, where "*τε νοεῖν libri: τὸ νοεῖν Karsten*" should read "*τε νοεῖν Karsten: τὸ νοεῖν libri*". See Diels (1882) 86.27 *apparatus criticus*; cf. Karsten (1835) 77. The error was pointed out by Cordero, (1979) 1 n. 1 (= pp. 24-5). De Rijk, (1983) 37, continues to follow the erroneous reading in Diels and Kranz. (I write of "the text of the manuscripts", leaving out of account the mere casual variants of *τεὸν* and *τὸ ὄν*, where the correction to *τ' ἐὼν* is obvious, and of *ἔμμενε*, in one manuscript, for *ἔμμεναι*.)

³⁰ De Rijk (1983) 36-7; see also 44-5.

³¹ De Rijk (1983) 37 n. 29.

³² For *ἔμμεν*, see fr. 2.6 (de Rijk's reference, on p. 49, to fr. 6.2 should be corrected to fr. 2.6). For *ἔμμεναι*, see fr. 6.1. For *ἔμμεναι*, see fr. 8.38. The eleven occurrences of *εἶναι*, used both as a copula and as a complete predicate, are listed by O'Brien, (1987) 125 (*Index des mots*

question that becomes only the more compelling when we consider that the distinction between the copulative and the so-called existential uses of the verb is in any case not always a clean one.³³

Personally, I prefer to believe that, grammatically, ἔμμεναι, ἔμμεναι, ἔμμεν and εἶναι are all mere synonyms, and that Parmenides uses one or other form simply as required by the metre.³⁴

§ VIII

Professor de Rijk's interpretation of fr. 6.1-2 does of course have the great advantage that it avoids making the goddess assert that "speaking and thinking (τὸ λέγειν τὸ νοεῖν τε) are what is (ἐὸν ἔμμεναι)", an assertion which some commentators have not shrunk from, but which, in the context of the poem, is an obvious absurdity, since it would mean that 'speaking' (cf. τὸ λέγειν) was "unborn" and "imperishable", as well as being "alone", "whole of limb", "unshaking and unendable" (i.e. all the "signs" attached to being in fr. 8.3 sqq.).³⁵

However, to avoid what Socrates would call this "pit of nonsense" (cf. *Parm.* 130D7), I suggest that the Homeric syntax, as in fr. 3, will again put us on the right track, and will provide a construction both simpler and easier than the one proposed by Professor de Rijk. The expressions τὸ λέγειν τὸ νοεῖν τε are not articular infinitives, 'saying' and 'thinking' (cf. de Rijk: "one's asserting and thinking"). Instead, the article, or the proto-article (τό), will be a demonstrative, and will act as object of the two infinitives. The meaning thus becomes, fr. 6.1: χρῆ τὸ λέγειν τὸ νοεῖν τε.... "It is necessary to say this, and to think this..."

This use of the article, or rather of the proto-article, as a forward-looking demonstrative has disappeared in classical Greek, but is still alive and well in the Greek of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*. For example, Achilles waits, all unconcerned, for the return of Patroclus, unaware that his friend is already dead, *Iliad* xvii 406-7: οὐδὲ τὸ ἔλπετο πάμπαν, ἐκπέρσειν πτολίεθρον ἄνευ ἔθεν. "He did not for one moment expect that, without his help, Patro-

greco, s.v. εἰμί [=sum]). For the different forms of the infinitive in Homer (ἔμμεναι, ἔμμεν, ἔμμεναι, ἔμμεν and εἶναι), see Monro (1891) 74 (§ 85.[1]). For a more elaborate account, see Curtius, (1880) 338-40.

³³ For examples, from both Parmenides (fr. 8.5-6) and Empedocles (fr. 17.13), where a predicate is tacked onto what would otherwise have been taken as an 'existential' use of the verb, see O'Brien (1987) 174-5.

³⁴ This argument I know may seem frivolous to those who have not (mis)spent a large part of their youth composing hexameters in Greek, and who may therefore not appreciate what a god-send it is to have such metrical variants at hand in one's hour of need. Monro, (1891) 75 (§ 85), writes specifically that whatever variations of meaning may have attached, originally, to the various forms of the infinitive (listed in the footnote but one preceding this), nonetheless, in the Greek texts that have come down to us, "the different forms are all construed in exactly the same way".

³⁵ Cf. O'Brien (1987) 209-10.

clus would sack the citadel.”³⁶ In this sentence, τό is a demonstrative, the object of the main verb (ἔλπετο), looking forward to the accusative and infinitive construction which falls at the beginning of the next verse (ἐκπέρσειν πολίεθρον), exactly as in Parmenides, where, or so I would suggest, τό, repeated, is the object of the two infinitives (λέγειν and νοεῖν), and looks forward to the accusative and infinitive construction that will follow (ἐὸν ἔμμεναι).³⁷

The translation of the whole sentence, fr. 6.1: χρὴ τὸ λέγειν τὸ νοεῖν τ’ ἐὸν ἔμμεναι, thus becomes: “It is necessary to say this, and to think this, namely that there is being.”³⁸

§ IX

If we adopt this construction of the opening sentence of fr. 6, then the two sentences following will most simply be taken as meaning (fr. 6.1), ἔστι γὰρ εἶναι, “for it is possible to be”, and (fr. 6.2) μηδὲν δ’ οὐκ ἔστι (sc. εἶναι), “while it is not possible for nothing to be.”³⁹

Here again Professor de Rijk proposes a different construction: ἔστι γάρ, translated as “indeed, it is”, and εἶναι μηδὲν δ’ οὐκ ἔστι, translated as “and its being what is-not is impossible”, on the grounds that ἔστι γὰρ εἶναι taken as meaning “there is to-be” is a “clumsy construction”.⁴⁰

But if we give ἔστι γὰρ εἶναι (fr. 6.1) no less than μηδὲν δ’ οὐκ ἔστι (fr. 6.2) a potential meaning, “it is possible...”, “it is not possible...”, as I suggest we should, then there is no awkwardness in the construction, while the argument acquires both subtlety and charm. The goddess assumes that we both think and speak. What then is the object of our thought and of our

³⁶ See Monro (1891) 226 (§ 257.4) and 227 (§ 258). For Monro’s classification of uses, see the footnote placed at the end of this section.

³⁷ Cf. O’Brien (1987) 24-7.

³⁸ See again O’Brien (1987) 24-7. Monro, (1891) 224 (§ 256), writes of the Homeric ‘article’ as an “Anaphoric Pronoun”. He distinguishes two uses in particular, which he calls “Substantival”, (1891) 224-6 (§ 257), and “Attributive”, (1891) 226-7 (§ 258). Our passage (*Il.* xvii 406-7) is quoted under the latter head. But there is in practice little difference in meaning between the use of the neuter singular article (τό) looking forward to clauses beginning with ὅτε and ὥς, a use which Monro claims as “Substantival”, and the use of the same article looking forward to an accusative and infinitive construction, as in the verse quoted from the *Iliad*, despite this latter text being classed by Monro as a precursor (but no more) of the later “Attributive” use of the article to form a so-called ‘articular infinitive’ (τὸ λέγειν = ‘speaking’/‘the fact of speaking’). Chantraine, (1953) 160 (§ 237), writes merely that: “*le neutre de l’article est employé pour annoncer des propositions [...] de même dans des passages où l’indépendance de l’infinitif est sensible*” (quoting our passage). For a very simple statement of the Sanskrit origins of what will become, in classical Greek, the definite article, see King and Cookson (1888) 357-8.

³⁹ See O’Brien (1987) 207-15. Purists please note that, in writing ἔστι and not ἔστιν when quoting from fr. 6.2, I let drop the *v ephelcusticon*, whose presence is determined solely by the metre, and which therefore has no point unless the word is quoted with the words which follow. I follow the same practice when quoting isolated words from fr. 2.3 and 5 and from fr. 3.

⁴⁰ De Rijk (1983) 36-7 and 44-5.

speech? Two candidates present themselves: being and non-being. Of these two candidates, the first is possible, fr. 6.1: ἔστι γὰρ εἶναι, "for it is possible to be". The second impossible, fr. 6.2: μηδὲν δ' οὐκ ἔστι [*sc.* εἶναι], "it is not possible for nothing to be". Hence the need to choose the first candidate, and not the second.

Hence the goddess' injunction, in the opening sentence of the fragment, fr. 6.1: χρὴ τὸ λέγειν τὸ νοεῖν τ' ἐὼν ἔμμεναι, "It is necessary to say this, and to think this, namely that being is."⁴¹

§ X

"It is not possible for what is nothing to be" (fr. 6.2) is also the translation given by Burnet.⁴² These words are obviously closer to Miss Anscombe's statement of her minor premiss ("what is not can't be") than the words I quoted earlier from fr. 2 (v. 3: "it is not possible not to be", v. 5: "it is necessary not to be"). Are we to conclude that Miss Anscombe has simply re-cast "it is not possible for what is nothing to be" (Burnet's translation of fr. 6.2) in a personal form ("What is not can't be")?

I am reluctant to think so. For, as we have seen, the words quoted from fr. 6 are clearly intended to form part of an argument. I am reluctant therefore to think that Miss Anscombe can have so violated the structure of Parmenides' argument as to detach from its context one of the two main arms of the reasoning ("it is not possible for nothing to be") and reintroduce it as a premiss, not to the conclusion that "there is being" (Parmenides' own *demonstrandum* in fr. 6), but to the quite different conclusion that "what is not can't be thought" (Miss Anscombe's statement of the conclusion to the argument that she claims for Parmenides).

I prefer therefore to suppose that Miss Anscombe's minor premiss is indeed what I had initially taken it to be: an amalgam of the modal statements attaching to Parmenides' two "ways of enquiry" in fr. 2, with a *subject* thought to be implied by the *second* way ('what is not') tacked on to the *modal statement* of the *first* way ('cannot not be'), accompanied, inevitably, by a change in the infinitive (from 'not be' to 'be').

An extremely contorted way of arriving at "What is not can't be". But, as I said before, the best that I can do by way of fitting how Parmenides' argument "runs" (Miss Anscombe's own expression) to words that we can read for ourselves in the text of the fragments.

⁴¹ This is a mere rough sketch of O'Brien, (1987) 207-15. I deliberately vary the translation of ἐὼν ἔμμεναι from "there is being" to "being is", since I believe that the fluidity in the construction helps to engineer the development of the goddess' argument, from the simple ἔστι of fr. 2 to the copulative uses of the same verb in fr. 8. See O'Brien (1987) 176-9.

⁴² Burnet (1930) 174.

§ XI

There remains Miss Anscombe's statement of the conclusion to what she claims as Parmenides' argument: "What is not can't be thought."

Those words do not appear anywhere in Burnet's translation of the fragments. Again, the nearest we come to them will be in fr. 2, in the reason that the goddess gives for refusing to adopt the second way ("is not, and it is necessary not to be"). "For what is not," the goddess tells Parmenides, in verses following her statement of the second way (fr. 2.7-8), "you could not know, nor could you tell it to others."⁴³

Am I wrong in supposing that Miss Anscombe has taken "what is not, you could not know" to mean the same as "what is not can't be thought"—the conclusion to her own statement of Parmenides' "argument"?

That is not a rhetorical question. I would like to think that I *was* wrong in having to adapt the conclusion of Miss Anscombe's argument so clumsily and with such difficulty to the text of the fragments. For as a re-statement of the reason Parmenides gives for refusing the second way, Miss Anscombe's little sentence ("What is not can't be thought") is hopelessly off course, for at least two reasons. If we adopt Miss Anscombe's terminology, then the words I have quoted from fr. 2 are the *premiss* to an argument, and not its *conclusion*. No less crucially, Parmenides writes in his 'premiss' not of *thinking*, but of *knowing*.

§ XII

But I can well imagine Miss Anscombe growing impatient with all this pedantry. If Parmenides' argument is not as she states it, then what is his argument?

The answer to that question is not to be found in a syllogism. In fr. 2, Parmenides' 'argument' lies in the statement of two "ways of enquiry", the "only ones that can be thought of": *is* and *is not*.⁴⁴ Those two ways are presented as contradictory, not simply because the one asserts and the other denies, but on the strength of the modal statements that, as we have seen, are tacked onto each way: "it is not possible not to be" (the first way), "it is necessary not to be" (the second way). And one of the reasons why it is so dangerous to tamper with Parmenides' own words, as Miss Anscombe has done, is precisely that, if we interfere with Parmenides' own statement of impossibility and of necessity, then we risk losing the thrust of his meaning and, in particular, his point that the two ways are irreconcilable.

⁴³ Fr. 2.7-8: οὐτε γὰρ ἂν γνοίης τό γε μὴ εἶν [...] οὐτε φράσαις. Cf. O'Brien (1987) 16-18.

⁴⁴ For the text and translation of these two verses (fr. 2.3 and 5), see O'Brien (1987) 16-18. For the description of the two ways as "the only ones that can be thought of" (fr. 2.2), see § XXIII below.

To a logician, it may seem a peccadillo to replace *must not be* (cf. fr. 2.5: "it is necessary not to be") by *cannot be* (cf. Miss Anscombe's minor premiss: "What is not can't be"), since whatever *cannot be*, he might well argue, *must* therefore *not be*. But Parmenides has expressed himself otherwise. In fr. 2, both modal statements end with a negative: *not to be*. The first way claims "it is not possible *not to be*", the second way, that "it is necessary *not to be*". That repetition, I believe, is deliberate, and is intended to bring out precisely the point that the two ways are mutually exclusive. For what the first way states is *impossible* (namely *not to be*), the second way states is *necessary*. And *vice versa*: what is claimed, by the second way, to be *necessary*, has already been stated, by the first way, to be *impossible*.

Dare I repeat myself? The first way states that it is *not possible not to be*. The second way flies in the face of that impossibility by stating *is not*. The second way states that it is *necessary not to be*. The first way flouts that necessity, by the simple statement: *is*. The point is lost, unless both modal statements end with the same infinitive: *not to be*.

The mutual exclusion of the two ways means that Parmenides (and hence the reader of the poem) is faced with a choice. If he chooses the first way: *is*, with the modal accompaniment *it is not possible not to be*, then he cannot also choose the second way: *is not*. And *vice versa*. If he were to choose the second way: *is not*, with its modal accompaniment *it is necessary not to be*, then he could do so only by abandoning the first way: *is*.

Hence the statement which Miss Anscombe takes as the conclusion to Parmenides' argument, but which is instead more in the nature of a premiss: "For what is not, you could not know, nor could you tell it to others." That statement is introduced by the goddess as a way of ensuring that we make the right choice. The second way, she tells Parmenides,

is a road of which we can learn nothing. For what is not, you could not know, nor could you tell it to others.⁴⁵

Because we cannot 'know what is not', we must repudiate the second way, since the second way states precisely: *is not*. And since we repudiate the second way, we must therefore adopt the first way: *is*.

§ XIII

But I very much doubt that Miss Anscombe will want to do as she is told. Miss Anscombe, like most of us, is perfectly happy to say, at different times or of different things, both *is* and *is not*, and will see no good reason why she should sacrifice *is* in favour of *is not*, or *vice versa*.

In particular, she will no doubt be impervious to the goddess' warning: "For what is not, you could not know." For, as we have seen, Miss An-

⁴⁵ Fr. 2.6-8. See O'Brien (1987) 16-18.

scombe has reformulated the goddess' warning words as "What is not can't be thought", and her immediate objection is therefore that we can perfectly well think of things that are not, namely "impossible states of affairs", as in a Ronald Searle drawing, or an impossible conjunction of properties and objects, for example "the round square cupola on Berkeley College".⁴⁶

We can perfectly well think of such things, Miss Anscombe will object, even if we think of them as non-existent and even as impossible.

—Yes, Miss Anscombe: but can you *know* them, and can you *point them out* to others?

§ XIV

Even that counter-argument does not really hit the point. For Parmenides does not intend his 'argument' to raise the question of whether, or how, we think of impossible states of affairs. His claim is that we cannot know, if there is nothing there at all to be known, that we cannot think of something, if there is nothing at all to be thought of.

That, at least, is how Plato, in the *Sophist*, has understood Parmenides' opening tactic. Given that *what is not* is, or at least appears to be, a 'name', what can it possibly be the name of, if, by *what is not*, we mean to speak of "what is not in any way at all" (τὸ μηδαμῶς ὄν, 237B7-8), of "that which just simply is not" (Cornford's translation of τὸ μὴ ὄν αὐτὸ καθ' αὐτό, 238C9)?⁴⁷

Suppose one of this company were seriously required to concentrate his mind and tell us to what this name can be applied—'that which is not'. Of what thing or of what sort of thing should we expect him to use it himself, and what would he indicate by it to the enquirer?⁴⁸

⁴⁶ For Miss Anscombe's "impossible states of affairs", see Anscombe (1969) 125 (we are still on only the first page of the article). Later, (1969) 129, Miss Anscombe twice writes of "the impossible pictures"; hence my example of the Ronald Searle drawing. Perhaps I should have added, more boldly, pictures of impossible worlds as drawn by M. C. Escher. The example of "the round square cupola" I have pinched from Quine, (1953). For the redundancy in his expression, see the penultimate footnote in the section following this (§ XIV).

⁴⁷ Cornford, (1935) 206. I shall often simplify this to "what just simply is not". For the difference between the two expressions quoted above ("what is not in any way at all", τὸ μηδαμῶς ὄν, 237B7-8; "what just simply is not", τὸ μὴ ὄν αὐτὸ καθ' αὐτό, 238C9), see the final footnote in § LX below. See also de Rijk (1986) 88-9.

⁴⁸ Plato, *Soph.* 237B10-C4, as translated by Cornford, (1935) 204. Plato's disjunction, in this passage, between 'using something oneself' and 'indicating to an enquirer', as also the similar disjunction at 238B6-8, is fairly clearly reminiscent of Parmenides' disjunction between 'knowing (γνοίης)' and 'telling, *sc.* to someone else (φράσσεις)' in fr. 2.7-8. I shall turn, in the concluding sections of my essay (§§ LXXIII-LXXIV; *cf.* § XXXIV), to the point that I here present Plato as taking up the denial of non-being put forward in fr. 2, whereas, at the beginning (237A8-9) as at the end (258D2-3) of his criticism of Parmenides, the Eleatic Stranger quotes, not fr. 2, but the opening verses of (our) fr. 7.

As an answer to this question, the Eleatic Stranger in Plato's *Sophist* would not be at all satisfied by the reply: an impossible state of affairs, or 'the round square cupola on Berkeley College'. For he would object, quite simply, that, in the latter case, we are thinking of two things, both of which we can be said to know: a square and a cupola. The point that, in thinking of these two things, we recognise that one cannot be an attribute of the other, would be neither here nor there.⁴⁹

On the contrary, Plato's question could well be reformulated as: can we think, without thinking of anything at all—no squares, no cupolas, just nothing at all?⁵⁰

§ XV

Indeed, we might perhaps further reformulate Plato's question: if we try to think, without thinking of anything at all, do we even succeed in thinking?

Plato's answer would no doubt be that no, we cannot *think* of what just isn't anything at all. We cannot *think* of what simply isn't there to be thought of.⁵¹

Has Miss Anscombe so much as addressed the question? She does write, of what she claims as one version of Parmenides' premiss, that it

appears to draw attention to the possibilities for thought—and who knows what they are? If I say I can think something, what of it? If I say I can't, does that mean I can't manage to do what I do in the other case? Again what of it?⁵²

Even this misses the point. The point (at least the point I have chosen to make here) is not whether I can or can't think of something, but whether, if I manage not to think of anything at all, I can still be said to be thinking.

⁴⁹ I am here assuming that cupolas are always round, and that 'a square cupola' (on my use of 'square', see the footnote following this) is therefore already a contradiction, even without the addition of the adjective 'round'. In Quine's example ("the round square cupola on Berkeley College", see the section preceding this), the adjective 'round' is in that case redundant, or perhaps a mere rhetorical flourish.

⁵⁰ Following Joseph, (1916) 144 n. 2, I am treating 'square' as a term which, though attributive in meaning, is substantival in form (in so far as it can be used equally well as a noun or an adjective). Plato would probably disagree. But I am already a long way from Plato's text. Even in talking of 'attributes', as in the paragraph preceding this, I am a far cry from Plato's own terminology, where talk is rather of 'names', a point often, and rightly, made much of by de Rijk, (1986) 389 (entries in the index).

⁵¹ My re-phrasing the answer as "We cannot think of what simply isn't there to be thought of" is the feeblest of feeble gestures towards indicating the difference between νοεῖν as implying that we 'notice' something and the ruminatory, self-absorbed connotation of the English word *think*. The French *s'apercevoir* lies somewhere between the two. See also the references given in the third footnote of § xxii below.

⁵² Anscombe (1969) 131.

Part two

§ XVI

But I must confess that, in raising that last point, I have not been able to resist lifting the veil on the *Introduction* to Miss Anscombe's *Collected papers*.⁵³ Miss Anscombe here tells us, rather sweetly, that, in her original article on Parmenides:

I was forgetting the celebrated argument of the Sophists, recorded for us by Plato:

He who thinks, thinks something,
He who thinks what is not, thinks nothing,
Therefore he who thinks what is not is not thinking.⁵⁴

With a sigh, a deep sigh, the scrupulous reader (myself) has to start all over again, by asking Miss Anscombe: where, in the whole of Plato, is this "celebrated argument" to be found? For, here as elsewhere in Miss Anscombe's *Introduction*, there is not a single specific reference, to Parmenides or to Plato or to the Sophists.⁵⁵

§ XVII

To try to trace the missing reference, we may think to turn first to a passage from the *Theaetetus*, where Socrates, as translated by Cornford, concludes, in successive sentences, that "to think what is not is to think nothing" and that "to think nothing is not to think at all".⁵⁶ Read in Cornford's translation, those two sentences might seem to provide a good match for both the form and the content of Miss Anscombe's argument. But if we go back to the Greek, the result is a shade less convincing. For the verb used here is δο-ξάζειν, more usually translated as 'judging' or 'opining', rather than as 'knowing' or 'thinking'.⁵⁷

⁵³ Anscombe (1981) vii-xi.

⁵⁴ Anscombe (1981) vii.

⁵⁵ In the ten years or more which elapsed between the publication of Miss Anscombe's original article on Parmenides (1969) and the *Introduction* to her *Collected papers* (1981), Miss Anscombe's attitude to Parmenides has undergone a remarkable sea-change. In her article she actually dismisses Parmenides at one point, ending part of her argument, (1969) 128, with a curt: "So farewell Parmenides." In her *Introduction* she fairly obviously calls him back again, and even concludes her remarks, (1981) xi, with a variant on the hackneyed theme of "subsequent philosophy" as "footnotes to Parmenides". But the habits of a life-time die hard. In her *Introduction*, as in her original article on Parmenides, Miss Anscombe not only still fails to give specific references to ancient texts; she still plays fast-and-loose with the wording of the authors she quotes from (as we shall see in what follows).

⁵⁶ *Theaetetus*, 189A10 and 12-13. Cornford (1935) 115.

⁵⁷ 'Judging' is the verb chosen in the two most recent translations of the *Theaetetus* into English. See McDowell (1973) 74, and Levett/Burnyeat (1990) 321, repeated from Levett (1928) *ad loc.* (p. 91). "Judgement" was also the translation adopted by Robin and Moreau, in

Can we perhaps hope to do better elsewhere? In his commentary, Cornford tells us that the argument of the *Theaetetus* appears also in Plato's *Euthydemus*.⁵⁸ Indeed Cornford writes, even more precisely, that, in the *Euthydemus*, there is to be found, "attributed to Protagoras", an argument whereby: "To think what is false is to think what is not; but that is to think nothing; and that, again, is not to think at all."⁵⁹

If she read Cornford's words, Miss Anscombe could hardly be blamed for taking them as tantamount to the "celebrated argument" which she recites in her *Introduction*: "He who thinks what is not, thinks nothing," "Therefore he who thinks what is not is not thinking."⁶⁰ Nor therefore could she be blamed for supposing that her "celebrated argument" was indeed to be found, attributed to Protagoras, in the *Euthydemus*.

But did Miss Anscombe then take the trouble to look up the references given by Cornford in support of his paraphrase? If she did, she would have been disappointed. For neither of the two passages referred to yields a parallel which is at all exact.⁶¹

In the flurry of sophistical arguments that lie thick on the ground in the later pages of Plato's *Euthydemus*, we do find a passage, not quoted by Cornford, where Euthydemus tries to chivvy Socrates into agreeing that: "If you do not know something, then you are not knowing."⁶² But there is barely a whisper, in the immediate context, of 'what is not' or of 'nothing'.

To find arguments on non-being, we have to go back several pages, to proofs purporting to show that falsehood and even contradiction are impossible.⁶³ But here we are landed in the opposite difficulty: the text now bristles with references to 'what is not', but there is now no obvious argument which concludes that "to think nothing [...] is not to think at all".⁶⁴

The beginning of Socrates' reply to the Sophists' use of non-being does yield a sentence which bears a fleeting resemblance to the form of Cornford's paraphrase (and therefore to the form of Miss Anscombe's "celebrated argument"). Socrates summarises Dionysodorus' position as that "A

their translation of Plato's works in the *Collection de la Pléiade*, (1950) 157. The latest translation into French opts for 'opining'. See Narcy (1994) 242: "*Qui a pour opinion une chose qui n'est pas n'a rien pour opinion*" (cf. 189A10) and "*Qui n'a rien pour opinion n'a même absolument pas d'opinion*" (cf. 189A12-3).

⁵⁸ Cornford (1935) 115.

⁵⁹ Cornford (1935) 115.

⁶⁰ Anscombe (1981) vii, quoted § XVI above.

⁶¹ Cornford, (1935) 115 n. 3, refers to *Euthydemus*, "286C" and "283E". The name of Protagoras appears only in the first of these two passages (*Euthydemus*, 286B7-C6), and the argument which is given there (286C6-8) is not at all the same as the argument which Cornford quotes in his commentary on the *Theaetetus*. See my third paragraph below.

⁶² *Euthydemus*, 293C6: οὐκοῦν εἴ τι μὴ ἐπίστασαι, οὐκ ἐπιστήμων εἶ;

⁶³ *Euthydemus*, 283E1-4C8 (falsehood); 285D7-6B6 (contradiction).

⁶⁴ Cornford (1935) 115 (quoted above). Cf. Anscombe (1981) vii (also quoted above): "Therefore he who thinks what is not is not thinking."

man must either, if he speaks, speak the truth or not speak".⁶⁵ But not only are specific references to 'what is not' no longer in the foreground at this moment in the dialogue; even more disturbingly, if we are going to take this text as the source of Miss Anscombe's argument, then we shall have to suppose that she has glossed *speaking* as *thinking*.⁶⁶

But, if we are going to allow that equivocation, then we might as well turn directly to the *Sophist*, and to the opening section of the reply to Parmenides, where the Stranger introduces an argument which provides a much closer analogue to Miss Anscombe's little trilogism, provided only that, as in the *Euthydemus*, we are again willing to replace Plato's *speaking* by Miss Anscombe's *thinking*.⁶⁷ If someone attempts to utter the words *not being*, so the Stranger asks of Theaetetus, should we not refuse to allow the claim that he is speaking, and yet that he is speaking of nothing? On the contrary should we not declare that such a person is not even 'speaking' at all?⁶⁸

Is this perhaps the origin of the "celebrated argument", which Miss Anscombe tells us has been "recorded for us by Plato"?⁶⁹

§ XVIII

If it is, then Miss Anscombe has hit on a passage where both text and translation are especially treacherous. The Stranger first claims, *Soph.* 237E1-2: τὸν δὲ δὴ μὴ τί λέγοντα ἀναγκαιότατον, ὥς ἔοικε, παντάπασιν μὴδὲν λέγειν. Cornford translates, well enough: "So it seems to follow necessarily

⁶⁵ *Euthydemus*, 286C7-8: ἀλλ' ἢ λέγοντ' ἀληθῆ λέγειν ἢ μὴ λέγειν. This is, presumably, the first of the two passages (given as "286C") referred to by Cornford in his commentary on the *Theaetetus*, (1935) 115 n. 3 (quoted above). Cornford's second, but earlier, passage (given as "283E") is merely the opening stage of the argument that is summarised here by Socrates. See also the footnote following this.

⁶⁶ What I have called Socrates' summary (see the footnote preceding this) looks back, in part, to Dionysodorus' claim that there can be no contradiction if "I speak of the object, while you do not speak at all", 286B5-6: ἐγὼ λέγω μὲν τὸ πρᾶγμα, σὺ δὲ οὐδὲ λέγεις τὸ παράπαν; I fear that Sprague's translation, (1965) *ad loc.*, repeated in (1993) 298, of the second half of the sentence as "you speak nothing at all", even apart from the oddity of the English, does not quite hit the mark. The Greek has οὐδέ, not οὐδέν, while τὸ παράπαν is an adverb. There is therefore no word in the Greek to correspond to Sprague's 'nothing'. The translation needed (if we keep to the verb *speak*) is: "You do not speak at all." In both places (Dionysodorus' original argument, 286B5-6, and Socrates' 'summary', 286C7-8), the opposition lies between 'speaking of the object' (286B5: ἐγὼ λέγω μὲν τὸ πρᾶγμα) or 'speaking the truth' (286C7: ἀληθῆ λέγειν) and 'not speaking at all' (286B5-6: σὺ δὲ οὐδὲ λέγεις τὸ παράπαν) or simply 'not speaking' (286C7-8: μὴ λέγειν). Chance's commentary, (1992) 99-100, is completely off-beam, since he fails (he is not alone) to see that 286B5-6: ἢ ἐγὼ λέγω μὲν τὸ πρᾶγμα, σὺ δὲ οὐδὲ λέγεις τὸ παράπαν; is a fresh condition for there being no contradiction, and not a consequence of the condition formulated in the sentence preceding (286B3-5: I speak of one thing, you speak of another).

⁶⁷ Cf. *Euthydemus*, 286C7-8 (quoted above).

⁶⁸ *Soph.* 237E4-6.

⁶⁹ Cf. Anscombe (1981) vii. The reader who finds it implausible that Miss Anscombe should have glossed *speaking* as *thinking* may care to look ahead to § xxii below, where I suggest a possible origin for Miss Anscombe's conflation of those two ideas.

that to speak of what is not 'something' is to speak of no thing at all."⁷⁰ The Stranger next argues, according to the manuscripts, *Soph.* 237E4-6:

ἄρ' οὖν οὐδὲ τοῦτο συγχωρητέον, τὸ τὸν τοιοῦτον λέγειν μὲν τι, λέγειν μὲντοι μηδέν, ἀλλ' οὐδὲ λέγειν φατέον, ὅς γ' ἂν ἐπιχειρή μὴ ὄν φθέγγεσθαι.⁷¹

Cornford translates:

Must we not even refuse to allow that in such a case a person is *saying* something, though he may be speaking of nothing? Must we not assert that he is not even saying anything when he sets about uttering the sounds 'a thing that is not'?⁷²

Cornford's translation is plainly unsatisfactory, since his use of two different words (*saying* and *speaking*) for λέγειν, in the first sentence of his translation, destroys the Stranger's rhetoric, which turns precisely on the repetition of λέγειν (237E5).

Worse still, Cornford's translation of λέγειν τι (*Soph.* 237E5) as "*saying* something" faces him with the insuperable difficulty, in the second sentence of his translation, that 'saying' cannot be used, in English today, without a complement, and that we cannot therefore translate ἀλλ' οὐδὲ λέγειν φατέον (*Soph.* 237E5-6) as: "He is not saying at all."⁷³

To try to get round the difficulty, Cornford introduces a new indefinite object, 237E5-6: "Must we not assert that he is not even saying anything...?" But now it is not only the Stranger's rhetoric that has been lost. Cornford's translation ruins the Stranger's meaning, which is no longer that our λέγειν has no object, but that, because it has no object, it is therefore not a λέγειν at all.

§ XIX

The difficulty is not only one of translation. Even if we correct the final stage in the argument, so as to bring out the intransitive use of λέγειν, the sequence of thought, in Cornford's translation, is far from obvious. For if we keep to the reading of the manuscripts (at *Soph.* 237E5), how are we in-

⁷⁰ Cornford (1935) 204.

⁷¹ The μὲν (in λέγειν μὲν τι) is found in only one main manuscript (T = codex Venetus, Appendix, Classis IV, cod. 1); it is retained both by Burnet, (1905) *ad loc.*, and by Duke and others, (1995) *ad loc.* (p. 419). For the meaning I attach to this particle, and for the reading τι (not retained in either of the two editions just mentioned), see § XX below.—I regard it as a minor calamity that, in the passage quoted above as elsewhere, the lineation of the new Oxford edition, by Duke and others, is not the same as that of the older edition by Burnet. Personally, I shall continue to give references to the lineation of Burnet's edition, at least until all the volumes in the new edition have appeared, by which time I shall almost certainly be safely in the grave.

⁷² Cornford (1935) 204.

⁷³ For the use of *say* in modern English, and especially for the difference between *saying* and *speaking*, see *OED* (1989), vol. xiv, p. 544 (s.v. 'say', v¹, § B. Signification). In writing that *say* cannot be used today without a complement, I am of course prescinding from such idiomatic expressions as the exclamatory *I say!*

tended to link the two ideas expressed by λέγειν μέν τι ('speaking of something') and λέγειν μέντοι μηδέν ('speaking of nothing')?

The Stranger and Theaetetus have just agreed, in the lines preceding my quotation, that "not speaking of something" is tantamount to "speaking of nothing" (*Soph.* 237E1-2: τὸν δὲ δὴ μὴ τὶ λέγοντα [...] μηδὲν λέγειν). The Stranger's next words are clearly introduced as marking a fresh stage in the argument (237E4: ἄρ' οὖν οὐδὲ τοῦτο συγχωρητέον...). But how can it be a fresh stage in the argument for Theaetetus, who has already agreed that 'not speaking of something' is tantamount to 'speaking of nothing', now to be made to refuse the contrary proposition, namely that one *can* 'speak of something' (cf. 237E5: λέγειν μέν τι 'and yet be speaking of nothing' (*ibid.* λέγειν μέντοι μηδέν)?

'Speaking of something' and 'speaking of nothing' have already been established as incompatible, since it has already been established (cf. *Soph.* 237E1-2) that 'speaking of nothing' is 'not speaking of something'. Why should the Stranger ask Theaetetus to repeat, in effect, what he has already agreed to?

§ XX

The solution to the problem lies, I believe, in an emendation of the text. Cornford has translated the reading of the manuscripts. Burnet⁷⁴ and the editors of the recent edition of the first volume of Plato's dialogues in the same series, the *Bibliotheca Classica Oxoniensis*,⁷⁵ adopt an emendation proposed independently, in the early years of the nineteenth century, by Schleiermacher and by Heindorf.⁷⁶ With the emended text (*Soph.* 237E5), we read not λέγειν μέν τι, but λέγειν μέν.

The argument now has point. The successive uses of λέγειν are linked, and distinguished, by the sequence of particles: μέν *solitarium*, followed by μέντοι, followed by ἀλλά.⁷⁷ In the sentence preceding (*Soph.* 237E1-2), it has been shown that the unnamed opponent, in "not speaking of something" (cf. μὴ τὶ λέγοντα), is "speaking of nothing" (μηδὲν λέγειν). We are now (237E4-6) to imagine the same opponent objecting: "But I do speak (λέγειν μέν), for all that (cf. μέντοι) I speak of nothing (λέγειν μηδέν)."⁷⁸ The

⁷⁴ Burnet (1905) *ad loc.* It should be noted that, contrary to popular belief (Frede [1967] 96, McCabe [1994] xiii), this is a second edition. The first edition was published in 1900. See the note I have added in my Bibliography.

⁷⁵ Duke and others (1995) *ad loc.* (p. 419).

⁷⁶ Schleiermacher (1807) 181 (translation), 489 (note). Heindorf (1810) 349.

⁷⁷ For the difference in meaning between μέντοι and ἀλλά, see Denniston, (1966) 405 (s.v. μέντοι, [2], [iii]). Unfortunately, Denniston gives no example of those two particles preceded by a μέν *solitarium*.

⁷⁸ For this use of μέντοι, see Denniston, (1966) 405 (s.v., [2], iii): "a balancing adversative", which "seldom goes so far as to eliminate, or seriously invalidate, the opposed idea". I translate the μέν *solitarium* by the English auxiliary verb *do*.

Stranger *refuses* to allow this claim (οὐδὲ [...] συγχωρητέον), and *counter-claims* (ἀλλὰ [...] φατέον) that the person who has allegedly been speaking of nothing has not in fact been 'speaking' at all (οὐδὲ λέγειν).⁷⁹

With this understanding of the passage, there can be no room for τὶ (237E5), which becomes an intrusive and meaningless repetition from the sentence preceding (237E1: τὸν δὲ δὴ μὴ τὶ λέγοντα). The sequence of thought requires precisely that, having won the admission that 'not speaking of something' is tantamount to 'speaking of nothing' (237E1-2), the Stranger should pass on to a new stage in the argument (237E4-6), by claiming that even 'speaking of nothing' is an unsatisfactory half-way house, and that 'speaking of nothing' is in fact tantamount to not 'speaking' at all.⁸⁰

§ XXI

There remains, even with the emended text, the difficulty of translation. If we translate or paraphrase the first two occurrences of λέγειν (*Soph.* 237E5: λέγειν μέν, λέγειν μέντοι μηδέν) by a verb which can be used intransitively in English, *speaking* or *talking* (for example: "If someone attempts to utter the words 'not being', should we not refuse to allow the claim that he is *speaking*, for all that he is *speaking* of nothing?"), then we invite the obvious retort, in English, that, in asking whether we can 'speak' (or 'talk') of what is not, – we have already done just that.

The obvious reply to the retort would be that we may have been *speaking* (or *talking*) of non-being, but that, in doing so, we haven't actually *said* anything.⁸¹ But any use of *saying* (or any combination of *saying* and *speaking*

⁷⁹ The strongly adversative ἀλλὰ, thus introduces a thesis which, so to speak, puts in the shade the attempted compromise marked by the two particles preceding, μέν and μέντοι.

⁸⁰ In the latest French translation of the *Sophist*, we are told that the 'elision' of τὶ ("l'élision de τὶ") is "tout à fait superflue et dangereuse". See Cordero (1993) 234-5. This is of course mere bombast. The translation which results verges on gibberish (*ibid.*, p. 126; cf. 237E4-5): "Ne faut-il pas ne pas admettre même ceci: que celui qui énonce quelque chose, n'énonce pourtant rien [...]?", and certainly does nothing to advance the argument. Cordero fails to see the point that, after the admission (*Soph.* 237E1-2) that 'not saying something' is tantamount to 'saying nothing' (μηδὲν λέγειν), the Stranger will pick to pieces the two components of the expression 'saying nothing', μηδὲν λέγειν, by refusing to admit that there can be a λέγειν with μηδέν as its object. But, here as elsewhere (see § xxviii and § xxx below), it is perhaps hardly surprising that Cordero has failed to follow the argument, when he is so much at sea on the terminology of Greek grammar and codicology. Not only does the indefinite pronoun τὶ not admit of 'elision' (see Schwyzler [1953] 403); what Schleiermacher proposed was not the *elision* of τὶ, but the *removal* of τὶ.

⁸¹ This is why, in attempting to follow the reading of the manuscripts, Cornford has switched verbs in mid-sentence, (1935) 204 (see § xviii above): "Must we not even refuse to allow that in such a case a person is *saying* something, though he may be speaking of nothing?" Once we keep to the same verb for the two occurrences of λέγειν (237E4-5), then the sentence, as recorded in the manuscripts, becomes an all too obvious *non-sequitur*: "Must we not even refuse to allow that in such a case a person is saying something, though he may be saying nothing?", or "Must we not even refuse to allow that in such a case a person is speaking of something, though he may be speaking of nothing?"—Incidentally, the difference between

ing, as in Cornford's translation) runs aground in the next sentence. For since *saying* cannot normally be used without a complement in English, the Stranger cannot continue, in English, by claiming that such a person "has not been saying at all" (cf. 237E5-6: ἀλλ' οὐδὲ λέγειν φατέον).

At the same time, any attempt to rescue the grammar, by providing the verb with an object, subverts the conclusion to the argument. An object, however indefinite, added to the verb makes it impossible to draw the conclusion that anyone who claims to speak of non-being, not only fails to say anything, but fails to engage in saying at all.⁸²

Here as before, the difficulty is typical of the difficulties that a translator inevitably faces in attempting to pass from one language to another.⁸³ We obviously need to find a single verb in English which can keep up with the successive uses of λέγειν in the Greek. Equally obviously, no single English word will answer to that need, unless it is bolstered with special overtones, which only a specific context will bring to the surface. My own preferred candidate would be the word *speak*, but with the meaning filled out to imply: *talking sense, speaking informatively about...*

Hence the need to fall back on single inverted commas: someone who claims to speak of what is not, is merely burbling; he is not really 'speaking' at all.⁸⁴

Cornford's translation, as emended, will run:

Must we not even refuse to allow that in such a case a person is speaking, for all that he is speaking of nothing? Must we not assert that, on the contrary, he

saying and *speaking* can be perfectly well rendered in Greek. See, for example, the play on λέγειν and φάναι at *Cratylus*, 429E1. But to explore these passages would take us too far afield.

⁸² Hence the error in the final sentence of Cornford's translation, (1935) 204 (see again § XVIII above): "Must we not assert that he is not even saying anything when he sets about uttering the sounds 'a thing that is not'?" 'Not saying anything' merely takes us back to 237E1: τὸν δὲ δὴ μὴ τι λέγοντα ('not saying something' and 'not saying anything' can both come out in Greek as μὴ τι λέγοντα). The Stranger's new point (at 237E5-6) is not, as in Cornford's translation, that there might be a saying that has no object (cf. Cornford's "not even saying anything"), but the quite different and more radical point, that, with μηδέν as its object, there can be no λέγειν at all.

⁸³ Cf. § IV above.

⁸⁴ Non-native speakers of English may need to have it pointed out that 'not to speak at all' is, in colloquial English, equivalent to 'saying nothing'. ("They rattled on all afternoon, but I did not speak at all" is, materially, equivalent to "... but I said nothing".) In English, we cannot therefore distinguish, even verbally, between λέγειν μηδέν and οὐδὲ λέγειν as 'saying nothing' and 'not saying at all', since 'saying nothing', in English (*tacere* or *silere*, in Latin), already implies οὐδὲ λέγειν. The verb *speak* does not behave in at all the same way. 'Speaking nothing' is not a natural form of words, despite its use in Sprague's translation of *Euthydemus* 286B5-6 (as noted in the footnotes to § XVII above); 'speaking of nothing' is not equivalent, in English, to 'saying nothing'. The English distinction between 'speaking of nothing' (cf. λέγειν μηδέν) and 'not speaking at all' (cf. οὐδὲ λέγειν) does therefore allow us to approximate to the point that Plato makes, in Greek (237E5-6), namely that the distinction between λέγειν μηδέν and οὐδὲ λέγειν is a verbal distinction, which carries no difference of meaning.

is not even 'speaking' when he sets about uttering the sounds 'a thing that is not'?⁸⁵

§ XXII

Miss Anscombe side-steps these difficulties, alike of text and of translation, by substituting *thinking* for *speaking* (always supposing that the passage I have quoted from the *Sophist* is indeed the passage that she has in mind).⁸⁶ But what can have led to that substitution? When Plato writes of *speaking* or *saying*, why does Miss Anscombe write of *thinking*?

I am strongly tempted to see in Miss Anscombe's equivocation a confused reminiscence of the final page of one of the sacred books of modern philosophy, Gilbert Ryle's *Concept of Mind*:

Just as undisciplined and heedless saying is not thinking but babbling, so, whatever shadow-operations may be postulated as occurring in the other place, these too might go on there in an undisciplined and heedless manner; and then they in their turn would not be thinking.⁸⁷

It is true that Ryle's preoccupations are not those of Plato. But for a butterfly mind...

No matter. Let us be indulgent. Whatever its origin may have been, let us allow Miss Anscombe her little equivocation between *thinking* and *speaking*.⁸⁸ Does Miss Anscombe not realise that, by introducing this argument into her earlier discussion, and still more by re-casting the Stranger's argument in terms not of *speaking* but of *thinking*, she has cut away the ground from under her own feet?

⁸⁵ *Soph.* 237E4-6, as emended by Schleiermacher and by Heindorf (see § xx above): ἄρ' οὖν οὐδὲ τοῦτο συγχωρητέον, τὸ τὸν τοιοῦτον λέγειν μὲν, λέγειν μέντοι μηδέν, ἀλλ' οὐδὲ λέγειν φατέον, ὅς γ' ἂν ἐπιχειρῇ μὴ ὄν φθέγγεσθαι; Cf. Cornford (1935) 204 (quoted § xviii above). In 'emending' Cornford's translation (by substituting *speaking*, without an object, for "saying something" and "saying anything"), I have also altered the translation of μέντοι (from "though" to "for all that"), and I have added "on the contrary" to translate the strongly adversative ἀλλά, which has been given no obvious equivalent in Cornford's English. The latter particle (ἀλλά) is here of primary importance. It answers the preceding μὲν, and the conjunction of the two particles (μὲν... ἀλλά) corresponds very nicely to the usage described by Denniston (1966) 5 (s.v. ἀλλά, § 1 [2]): "The strong adversative particle [*sc.* ἀλλά sometimes answering a μὲν in the preceding clause] disturbs the equipoise between the clauses, and the second clause states a consideration which goes some way towards invalidating the first." Exactly so: the clause introduced by ἀλλά brushes aside the half-hearted compromise of the preceding clause (λέγειν μὲν, λέγειν μέντοι μηδέν is brushed aside in favour of ἀλλ' οὐδὲ λέγειν φατέον).

⁸⁶ Cf. Anscombe (1981) vii; see § xvi above.

⁸⁷ Ryle (1949) 330.

⁸⁸ To pursue the point, we should not only have to look into the intimate relationship between thinking and speaking in Plato (a point which might well veer in Miss Anscombe's favour); we should also have to explore the differences between our English use of *knowing* and *thinking* and the range of words similar, but not identical, in meaning and in connotation used by Plato and by Parmenides. For a useful beginning, see von Fritz (1943), (1945) and (1946), on Parmenides and the Homeric background, and Lyons (1963), on Plato. The point is well made by de Rijk, (1983) 33-5.

The Stranger's argument is that, if someone tries to speak of what is not, he cannot properly be said to be *speaking*. Re-cast in terms of thinking: if someone tries to think of what is not, he cannot properly be said to be *thinking*. Surely Miss Anscombe must see that that argument is not refuted by claiming that we can, and do, think of "impossible states of affairs" or of "impossible pictures"?⁸⁹ Quite obviously, we not only have to think, we may even have to think quite hard, in order think of an impossible state of affairs, and still more to work out that an impossible state of affairs is indeed... impossible.

But that is not at all the Stranger's point. The Stranger is not here concerned with "states of affairs", possible or impossible. At this stage in the dialogue (237E4-6), the Stranger's question is still, by implication, whether we can speak (or think) of "what is not in any way at all" (237B7-8), of "what just simply is not" (238C9).⁹⁰ Keeping to that point, let us ask again: can we think, and think of nothing at all? If we think of nothing at all, are we thinking?

Does Miss Anscombe have an answer?

Part three

§ XXIII

Miss Anscombe has had a good run for her money.⁹¹ It is time for Professor Guthrie to show his paces. Guthrie has certainly overcome the first hurdle, even if, as we shall see, he falls at the second. For Guthrie is perfectly lucid on the point that Parmenides is not here concerned to deny the existence of "the unicorns, centaurs and present King of France beloved of the twentieth-century philosopher".⁹² But if Guthrie's error is more subtle, it will ultimately prove no less injurious to our understanding both of the poem of Parmenides and of Plato's *Sophist*.

⁸⁹ Anscombe (1969) 125 ("impossible states of affairs"), 129 ("impossible pictures"), reprinted in Anscombe (1981) 3 ("impossible states of affairs"), 5-6 ("impossible pictures"). See § XIII above.

⁹⁰ Cf. § XIV above. "At this stage in the dialogue." Context here is all important: the argument that 'speaking of nothing' is not even 'speaking' (237E4-6) forms part of two cumulative arguments (237B2-E7 and 238A1-C11) falling within a first session of 'torture' (237B2 sqq.), designed to support Parmenides by claiming that the attempt to speak of "what is not in any way at all" (237B7-8) or of "what just simply is not" (238C9) results in a mere *flatus vocis*. See further §§ XXXV-XLVII and §§ LV-LVII below.

⁹¹ Even so, I am sorry to leave Miss Anscombe without pursuing her point as to whether the minor premiss should be taken *in sensu composito* or *in sensu diviso* (see § I above). This distinction will perhaps be more familiar to some readers as the distinction *de dicto* and *de re*. For my own thoughts on the subject, in relation to Parmenides, see O'Brien (1987) 203-4 and 294-302.

⁹² Guthrie (1965) 17.

When the goddess introduces her two “ways of enquiry”, *is* and *is not*, she states quite specifically that they are “the only ones that can be thought of”. So at least I understand fr. 2.1-2: εἰ δ’ ἄγ’ ἐγὼν ἐρέω [...] αἵπερ ὁδοὶ μόναι διζήσιός εἰσι νοῆσαι.⁹³ Professor de Rijk favours a different construction, with νοῆσαι “epexegetic” of διζήσιος.⁹⁴ But the expression which results, “the only routes of enquiry for thinking (νοῆσαι)”, is surely both repetitive and cumbersome.⁹⁵

I prefer therefore to take the infinitive (νοῆσαι) as dependent on the adjective (μόναι): “the paths of enquiry” (ὁδοί [...] διζήσιος) are “the only ones that can be thought of” (μόναι [...] νοῆσαι). Again, the syntax adopted by Parmenides is the syntax familiar to us from the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, where the infinitive is frequently linked in this way to an adjective. For example, Polydamas voices the general fear, *Iliad* xviii 258: ῥήϊτεροι πολεμίζειν ἦσαν Ἀχαιοί. Before the return of Achilles, “the Achaeans were easier to fight against”.⁹⁶

Grammatically, the relation of the infinitive (πολεμίζειν in Homer, νοῆσαι in Parmenides) to the noun that is taken as its object (‘the Achaeans’ in Homer, ‘ways of enquiry’ in Parmenides) is the same as the use of the infinitive in the passages cited earlier in support of the meaning I attach to fr. 3, with the difference only that, in fr. 2.2, as in the passage last quoted from the *Iliad*, the infinitive is ushered in by an adjective: μόναι (fr. 2.2), ῥήϊτεροι (*Iliad* xviii 258). In both cases, the infinitive (πολεμίζειν, νοῆσαι) is active in form and active in meaning, but with the noun in the sentence (‘the Achaeans’, ‘the ways of enquiry’), although it is cast in the nominative case (Ἀχαιοί, ὁδοί), being taken, not as the subject of the infinitive, but as its object. The Achaeans are ‘easier to fight’, not because *they* can fight *us* more easily, but because *we* can fight *them* more easily. The ‘ways of enquiry’ are not ‘the only ones to think’, but the only ones to be thought *of*.⁹⁷

⁹³ See O’Brien (1987) 17 and 153-4.

⁹⁴ De Rijk (1986) 32.

⁹⁵ De Rijk quotes Mourelatos, (1970) 55 n. 26, where we are told that the infinitive is “final”, and where the translation given (p. 55) is: “what routes of quest alone there are for thinking [knowing]”.

⁹⁶ This example is quoted by Chantraine, (1953) 300 (§ 440), who translates: “*Les Achéens étaient plus aisés à combattre.*” Cf. Monro (1891) 198 (§ 232).

⁹⁷ Similarly, when Plato writes, *Phaedo* 90C9-D1, of a λόγου [...] δυνατοῦ κατανοῆσαι, he means, of course, a speech “capable of being understood”, not a speech “capable of understanding”. Goodwin, who quotes this example, writes both simply and neatly, (1897) 307 (§ 763): “The omitted subject of the infinitive [...] is distinct from that of the adjective.” (The ‘subject’ of the adjective is λόγου, and the subject of the infinitive is a very generalised ‘we’, left to be understood from the context.)—For the passages quoted earlier in support of my interpretation of fr. 3 (Aristotle, *Phys.* viii 1, 251b19-20, and *Iliad*, ix 230-1), see §§ II-IV above. De Rijk will perhaps object that the parallel I have now given (fr. 2.1-2 and *Iliad*, xviii 258) is not exact, in so far as the construction I have suggested for Parmenides runs up against the order of words: how can we treat νοῆσαι as epexegetic of μόναι, with διζήσιος intervening (cf. fr. 2.2: αἵπερ ὁδοὶ μόναι διζήσιός εἰσι νοῆσαι)? But this objection, I believe, loosens its hold if we read the verse aloud, for the adjective (μόναι) falls before the caesura, while the

In the passage from the *Iliad*, the use of a phrasal verb ('to fight against') allows us to avoid the use of a passive voice in the English translation. I hesitate to use the same stratagem for translating the introduction to Parmenides' two ways, although the result might perhaps pass muster with an indulgent reader: Parmenides' ways of enquiry are "the only ones for thinking of". If we decide, as I think we should, that that form of words is too strained to be counted as normal English, then we are faced with the same choice as before. To retain an active voice in the English translation, we should have to introduce a fresh subject: the ways of enquiry are "the only ones that I/you/we can think of". To avoid so troubling and embarrassing a choice, it will be simpler by far to change from an active to a passive voice: the ways of enquiry are "the only ones that can be thought of", or, if we wish to avoid that intrusive 'can', "the only ones there are to be thought of".⁹⁸

As before, the introduction of a passive voice into the English translation springs solely from the awkwardness, in English, of taking the same word (in this instance, ὁδοί) as both subject and object, in this case as both *subject* of the main verb (εἶσι) and *object* of the infinitive (νοῆσαι). Translating as I have done ("the only ones there are to be thought of") carries no implication at all that the infinitive, in Greek, which is active both in form and in meaning, has been somehow construed as a passive voice.⁹⁹

infinitive (νοῆσαι) falls at the end of the line, so that the second word can easily be heard as answering the first (fr. 2.2): μούνα [...] νοῆσαι, "the only ones to be thought of".—And lest that argument be thought merely subjective, let me just add that, among the extant fragments, there are no fewer than seven other verses where, in the equivalent positions (before the caesura, at the end of the verse), we find similar pairings of words that are linked syntactically, namely: a verb and its object (ὠσάμεναι [...] καλύπτρας, fr. 1.10; διάκοσμον [...] φατίζω, fr. 8.60; σε [...] παρελάσσει, fr. 8.61), a noun and its adjective (ἀθανάτοισι [...] ἡνιόχοισιν, fr. 1.24; κύκλωπος [...] σελήνης, fr. 10.4), a noun and its dependent genitive (ἀληθείης [...] ἦτορ, fr. 1.29), and an infinitive governed directly by a verb (fr. 8.53: κατέθεντο [...] ὀνομάζειν). An adjective with an epexegetical infinitive, as in fr. 2.2 (μούνα [...] νοῆσαι), would be very much at home in this list.

⁹⁸ The French can happily translate (see O'Brien and Frère [1987] 16): "... *voies de recherche, les seules que l'on puisse concevoir*", because, at least in classical French, *on* is much more truly depersonalised than the English *one*, which is often hardly more than a euphemism for speaking of... *oneself*. (Though this may not last long, since in demotic French *on* seems to be well on the way to ousting *nous*, if one may judge by the posters that plastered the walls of Paris in a recent campaign on behalf of the Communist Party, with the depiction of a proletarian couple happily entwined, and the legend: *Nous, on vote communiste*.) But what the French gain on the swings (a depersonalised *on*), they lose on the roundabouts, since, in order to translate νοῆσαι in this fragment, they have to introduce a high falutin' *concevoir* for the simpler and more robust *think of*.

⁹⁹ Interestingly, the Greeks themselves, at least by the time of Plato, were conscious, or could be made conscious, of the ambivalence. One of the many sophisms in the *Euthydemus* turns precisely on the infinitive, dependent on an adjective, being construed with the same noun as object and subject of the action. See *Euthydemus*, 300A1-6: cloaks (ἱμάτια) are δύνατά ὁρᾶν in the sense both that they can be seen (ἱμάτια is here the object of ὁρᾶν) and that they can see (ἱμάτια is now taken as subject of the infinitive).—The sophism does not, as Lamb appears to suppose, in the notes to his Loeb translation of the dialogue, (1924) 480 n. 1, turn

§ XXIV

So much for grammar and translation. More troubling is the seeming contradiction highlighted by this interpretation of the goddess' introduction to the two ways. For in verses taken from later in the poem (fr. 7.1-2), the goddess explicitly warns Parmenides against following a "way of enquiry" which is not either one of the two named earlier in the poem. This new way states that "things that are not, are", and is clearly identified, in the following lines of the fragment, with the fallacious use of the senses, since the goddess tells Parmenides:

Let not habit, too full of experiences, drag you along this way and force you to exercise an aimless eye, an echoing ear and tongue.¹⁰⁰

How are we intended to relate the original two ways, *is* and *is not*, and this new, seemingly intrusive, third way, which states that *things that are not, are*?

Guthrie tackles this question head-on. And his answer (since he is a thoughtful and intelligent writer) is not at all a foolish one. "The 'third way'", he claims, is "not independent of the other two, but an illegitimate fusion of them both."¹⁰¹ So it may well prove to be. But when we try to discover exactly how this 'fusion' has been effected, Guthrie fails us. The second way, he tells us, construed "*ad sensum*", is "the way of thinking that 'nothing' *can* exist".¹⁰² That same way, Guthrie also tells us, consists in the "assertion that there is nothing".¹⁰³ Whereas the way that we are led into, if we follow "an aimless eye, an echoing ear and tongue" (fr. 7.4-5), "includes the belief that 'what is not is'".¹⁰⁴

These successive statements of the second and (what I shall call for convenience) the third way leave the hapless reader perplexed. What is the difference between saying that "'nothing' *can* exist", that "there is nothing" and that "'what is not is'"? The introductory words differ: "thinking", "assertion", "belief". The formulae themselves differ: "'nothing' *can* exist", "there is nothing", "'what is not is'". But what is the difference in meaning?

Does the second way claim only that "'nothing' *can* exist", stopping short of claiming that nothing does exist? Presumably not, since at the foot of the same page we are told that, according to this same way, "there is nothing". But in that case what is the difference between 'nothing' and

primarily on a difference in meaning of δυνατός, as 'possible' or 'able'. The shift in meaning of the whole expression δυνατό ὄρεν is directly dependent on the syntactical ambivalence, whereby ἰμάτια is taken, successively, as object and as subject of the same infinitive.

¹⁰⁰ Fr. 7.3-5. The translation, which contains elements of paraphrase, is taken from O'Brien, (1987) 33.

¹⁰¹ Guthrie (1965) 22.

¹⁰² Guthrie (1965) 22 (Guthrie's own italics).

¹⁰³ Guthrie (1965) 22.

¹⁰⁴ Guthrie (1965) 23.

‘what is not’, both of which are said to be, the former by the second way, the latter by the third way? But if ‘nothing’ and ‘what is not’ are synonyms, then wherein lies the difference between the second way and the third, since both ways tell us of ‘nothing’/‘what is not’ that it ‘is’?

§ XXV

One might, of course, spend many a happy hour musing on the difference between ‘there is nothing’, taken as meaning ‘there simply isn’t anything at all’, and ‘what is not, is’, taken as meaning ‘there is something, but what there is, is what is not’.¹⁰⁵

But Guthrie gives no indication at all that he means there to be this, or any other, difference in meaning between the two sentences: ‘there is nothing’ and ‘what is not, is’, despite the *first* sentence (‘there is nothing’) being given as a statement of the second way, while the *second* sentence (‘what is not, is’) is given, no less plainly, as a statement of the third way and of the opinions of mortals.

The best one could do, by way of keeping the second way from being swallowed up by the third, would perhaps be to return to the text of the poem and to emphasise the difference between singular and plural. The second way, according to Guthrie (*cf.* fr. 2.5), claims that “there is nothing”.¹⁰⁶ The third way states that “things that are not, are” (fr. 7.1). The second way therefore (or so one might argue) speaks of the existence of non-being in the singular (if one so construes Guthrie’s *nothing*). The third way speaks of the existence of non-beings in the plural.

But even that fragile defence is not in fact available to Professor Guthrie, since, in paraphrasing the third way, he specifically writes of “what is not”, in the singular.¹⁰⁷

§ XXVI

Even so, Guthrie would perhaps object that I am here doing him an injustice. The third way, he tells us, in the last of the three passages that I have quoted, includes not only “the belief that ‘what is not is’”, but also “the belief [...] that ‘to be and not to be are the same and not the same’”.¹⁰⁸ Is it this latter feature of the third way which Guthrie would claim is tantamount to the “belief in any change, motion, becoming or perishing of what is”?¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁵ ‘What is not, is’: when I am not quoting directly from Guthrie, I prefer to print this sentence with a comma.

¹⁰⁶ Guthrie (1965) 22.

¹⁰⁷ Guthrie (1965) 23: the third way “includes the belief that ‘what is not is’”.

¹⁰⁸ Guthrie (1965) 23. The quotation (“to be and not to be are the same and not the same”) is taken from fr. 6.8-9.

¹⁰⁹ See again Guthrie (1965) 23.

Perhaps so. But the two features of Guthrie's statement of the third way are not really separable. The claim that "'to be and not to be are *not* the same,'" so Guthrie tells us, "no one in his senses would deny."¹¹⁰ Conversely, the claim that "'to be and not to be *are* the same,'" Guthrie clearly sees as a consequence of "the belief that 'what is not is'".¹¹¹

We are therefore back in the same difficulty as before. What difference can there be between 'what is not, is', taken as the mainspring of the false belief of mortals, as described in the third way (and specifically of the belief that "to be and not to be are the same"), and the two sentences which Guthrie had given as a direct expression of the second way: "'nothing' *can* exist" and "there is nothing"?¹¹²

As before, how do we distinguish between 'nothing' and 'what is not'? As before, how do we distinguish between the second way and the third, if both ways tell us of 'nothing'/'what is not' that it 'is'?

§ XXVII

The root of the error, as so often, lies not in the immediate difficulty, in Guthrie's struggles to distinguish the third way from the second, but many pages earlier, in the translation he had given of the two ways as respectively: "it is" and "it is not".¹¹³

The provocative presence of the pronoun ('it') as subject of the sentence leads to a long and scholarly discussion of earlier views, concluding that "the serious choice of subject lies between 'what is' and 'what can be talked and thought about'".¹¹⁴ And that conclusion leads to an even longer discussion designed to circumvent Owen's objection that 'what is' as subject of the two ways leads to "mere tautology" in the one case (*what is, is*) and to "flat contradiction" in the other (*what is, is not*).¹¹⁵ But before we follow Professor Guthrie into these not uninteresting by-ways, may I suggest that we pause to question his initial assumption. Does the first way, still more does the second way, have to have a subject at all?

That question will not seem a strange one to Professor de Rijk. For he writes, quoting Mourelatos, that "there is general agreement among modern scholars on the absence of a subject for *ἔστι*", and that this absence is to be "regarded as intentional and is not to be emended away nor should in their view a subject be mentally supplied".¹¹⁶

But a crucial distinction is needed. What Mourelatos in fact writes is that: "There is now an important measure of agreement among critics" and that

¹¹⁰ Guthrie (1965) 23.

¹¹¹ Cf. Guthrie (1965) 23.

¹¹² Guthrie (1965) 22. Cf. § XXIV above.

¹¹³ Guthrie (1965) 13-14.

¹¹⁴ Guthrie (1965) 15.

¹¹⁵ Guthrie (1965) 15-20. Owen (1960) 90, reprinted in Owen (1975) and in Owen (1986).

¹¹⁶ De Rijk (1986) 32-3.

“the absence of a subject for these verb-forms”, namely the ἔστι and the εἶναι in the goddess’ statement of the first way (fr. 2.3), “is intentional, and we are not to supply a *specific* subject, either by emendation or mentally” (my italics).¹¹⁷

The italicised expression is all important. For what Mourelatos will in fact propose, is not merely what he calls an “enriched” copula (an enigmatic expression, which rightly causes de Rijk to raise an eyebrow); following in the footsteps of G. E. L. Owen, Mourelatos proposes to attach to the statement of the first way a “formal” subject, so that the ‘is’ becomes what he calls the “‘is’ of speculative predication”, a phenomenon which he represents by what he calls “the sentence-frame ‘__is__’”.¹¹⁸ Far from having no subject, Parmenides’ first way is intended to have any and every subject you care to think of.

§ XXVIII

Professor de Rijk’s own preferred solution to the problem of a subject for the two ways runs something along the same lines, though with a distinction between “a ‘*material* object’” and a “‘*formal* object’”. He writes:

I think that one cannot help mentally supplying as the subject of the ἔστιν and οὐκ ἔστι whatever in our sensible world makes the object of one’s enquiry (διζήσιος) and νοεῖν. Anything in our world may be such a “*material* object” of the quest realised by the first route (as well as by every false route). However, the “*formal* object” of each quest as well as of νοεῖν is just a thing’s “what-is” or being-ness.¹¹⁹

Nor is de Rijk alone in his desire to find a subject for ἔστι no less than for οὐκ ἔστι. For the truth is that, despite there being “general agreement among modern scholars on the absence of a subject for ἔστι”, nonetheless there seems to be, in practice, an irresistible urge to provide some kind of subject for both ways, even apart from the open-ended subject espoused by Owen and Mourelatos. Among the various candidates we find: “what is” (for the first and the second way),¹²⁰ “what is” (for the first way) and “what is not” (for the second way),¹²¹ “whatever we can know, or whatever there is to be known”, “the knowable” (for both ways?).¹²²

Indeed so enthusiastic do some authors become that they even read back their subject into the fragments, and write out, in Greek characters, οὐκ ἔστι εἶναι and ἔστι μὴ εἶναι (understood, apparently, as “*l’être n’existe pas*” and

¹¹⁷ Mourelatos (1970) 47.

¹¹⁸ Mourelatos (1970) 56-61 and 70-1. Cf. Owen (1960) 95.

¹¹⁹ De Rijk (1986) 33.

¹²⁰ Cf. Robin, (1948) 103: “*l’Être est*” (the first way), “*l’Être n’est pas*” (the second way).

¹²¹ Cf. Rivero, (1966) 221: “*l’una* [sc. *via*] *è che l’essere esista*” (the first way), “*l’altra* [sc. *via*] *è che ciò che non è esista*” (the second way).

¹²² Kahn (1968/1969) 711-2.

"*le néant existe*"), for all the world as though the words printed on the page in Greek were to be found hiding somewhere in the text.¹²³

The truth, I would suggest, is simpler, far simpler. There is no subject, because Parmenides does not intend to express either of the two ways in the form of a proposition. *Is* and *is not*, with their modal accompaniments, are all there are. The first way states: *is*. The second way states: *is not*. In the goddess' opening account of the two ways, neither verb is given a subject, expressed or 'understood'.¹²⁴

§ XXIX

I pause there, not only for effect, but because I know it may take the philosophically-minded reader more than a moment to adapt to the idea that significant thought can be couched in anything other than propositional form.¹²⁵

Miss Anscombe, for example, obviously has not a moment's doubt when she strings together three different propositions apparently in the form of a syllogism at the beginning of her article, and presents the result as how Parmenides' "argument runs".¹²⁶ Indeed we have here the fine spectacle of two presuppositions rearing their heads at once: Miss Anscombe fairly obviously (pre)supposes that all thinking is propositional and that all argument can be cast into something approximating to the form of a syllogism. The second presupposition has failed to find any foothold in the text of the

¹²³ Cordero (1979) 15 (the Greek) and 6 (the French).

¹²⁴ Fränkel has been one of the few scholars to resist the urge to provide a subject, or subjects, that will fit the two ways. He does so by claiming, (1946) 169 and (1962) 403 n. 13, that ἔστι and οὐκ ἔστι are here impersonal uses of the verb, as in the expressions "it is raining" (in Greek: ὕει) or "it is snowing" (in Greek: νείφει), where the seeming pronoun ('it') has no reference outside the meaning of the verb, and is, of course, altogether absent in the Greek. My objection to this interpretation is not therefore that it supplies a subject where there should be none, but that a truly impersonal use of the verb would make it impossible for the goddess to pass from her statement of the first way, a simple "is" (in fr. 2.3), to her claim (fr. 6.1-2) that "being is" or that "there is being". More on this in a moment (§ xxxii below). Cf. O'Brien (1987) 164-5.

¹²⁵ In daring to speak, here as at the end of the section preceding this, of a 'proposition', I realise that I am venturing, no doubt injudiciously, onto a terrain loaded with booby-traps as a result of modern philosophical discussions. As I hope the final paragraph of this section will make clear, I am using the word in its simplest of simple meanings, namely to designate a form of words which allows us to distinguish (as the French rather neatly put it) *ce dont on parle* and *ce qu'on en dit*. Cf. *OED* (1989), vol. xii, pp. 651-2 (s.v. 'proposition', § 4, a, [b]). To pursue the discussion, an obvious starting-point might be Ayer (1946), and his attempted distinctions between *sentence*, *statement* and *proposition*, or Ayer (1940) 92-112, and his attempted distinction between propositions true and false, or perhaps, for a more sophisticated account, the second part of Strawson's *Individuals*, (1959) 137 sqq. But whatever terminological (and philosophical) niceties one might eventually arrive at should not obscure the very straightforward point I am hoping to make in this, and in the following five sections (§§ xxx-xxxiv), on the structural differences between the *is* of the first way, the *is not* of the second way (in fr. 2 and in fr. 8.15-18) and the claim that *things that are not, are* of the intrusive 'third' way (in fr. 7.1-2).

¹²⁶ Anscombe (1969) 125. Cf. § 1 above.

poem. May I ask the reader, if only for a moment, to withhold credence from the first presupposition as well?

For the presupposition shared by Guthrie, by Miss Anscombe and by so many others, that Parmenides has an 'argument', and that his 'argument' must be expressed in terms of a proposition—is just that, a presupposition, and no more, a presupposition which has no foundation in the text of the poem, and which we shall do well to be rid of.

In the goddess' initial statement of the two ways, in fr. 2, as in her repetition of the two ways in fr. 8.15-18, there is no subject, because Parmenides does not intend to distinguish between what we are talking about (a subject) and what we are saying of it (a predicate). Neither of the two ways therefore is cast in the form of a proposition.¹²⁷

§ XXX

Why and how that should be so is perhaps most simply to be seen, if we reflect upon the possibility of a subject for the second way (fr. 2.5). What could such a subject be? If we try adding as subject 'being' or 'what is', then we immediately contradict the modal statement of the second way, which tells us: "It is necessary not to be."

But what happens if we therefore take as subject 'what is not' or 'non-being'? We no longer contradict the modal statement: "It is necessary not to be", but what meaning can we attach to a proposition where the subject is *non-being* and where the verb is *is not*? If we try to give meaning to such a statement, then we come dangerously close to making the second way an alternative statement of the first: "Is, and it is not possible not to be." For if we say of *non-being* that it *is not*, then how do we stop the two negatives simply cancelling each other out, with the result that, since there is no non-being, there can be only being?

Some inkling of that implication, and the desire to avoid it, presumably leads the author I quoted a moment ago to switch the negative particle from

¹²⁷ In fairness to Miss Anscombe, I must point out that, throughout this section, I am again writing exclusively of Miss Anscombe's original article on Parmenides (1969). (See the opening paragraphs of my essay.) In the *Introduction* to her *Collected papers*, (1981) x, Miss Anscombe does present the two ways of fr. 2.3 and 5 without a subject, on the grounds that "The subject—he, she, it, or they—is built into the verb, which therefore does not seem incomplete without a separate word for a subject". So near, and yet so far... The grammatical phenomenon to which Miss Anscombe appeals is of course true enough, but will not suffice to explain the absence of a subject in Parmenides' fr. 2. Elsewhere in Greek prose or poetry, the subject whose presence is implied by the form of the verb is easily supplied from the context. But there is no implication of a subject to either ἔστι or οὐκ ἔστι in the goddess' initial statement of the two ways in fr. 2; nor, as we shall see, does the verb of the second way (οὐκ ἔστι) ever acquire a subject in the course of the poem. The point therefore which Miss Anscombe has missed, even in her *Introduction*, is that, in Parmenides' statement of the two ways, it is not only what Miss Anscombe calls, (1981) x, the "subject word" which is missing; the subject itself is missing (temporarily, as we shall see, for the first way; permanently so, for the second).

the verb to an (imaginary) subject, and to write, in Greek, ἔστι μὴ εἶναι, “*le néant existe*”.¹²⁸ He is not alone. We find, in the literature: “*NICHT IST ist*”,¹²⁹ “*ciò che non è esista*”,¹³⁰ and even, most emphatically of all: “The second way [...] does not assert that Being does not exist, but that non-Being exists.”¹³¹

But if we look back at the Greek, how can such things be? The Greek presents a simple negation of the verb: οὐκ ἔστι, “is not”. How can we possibly treat the verb (‘is not’) as though it were a noun (“*NICHT IST*” as subject of “*ist*”, “*ciò che non è*”, “non-Being”)? Even more extraordinarily, having translated the verb as a noun, how can we possibly justify re-introducing the verb—but without its negation, so that ‘is not’ becomes ‘is’? And even if all that were possible, grammatically (which of course it isn’t), how could we then possibly continue with the modal statement (*cf.* fr. 2.5): “It is necessary not to be”, when the second way, in the first half of that same verse, has stated, of non-being, that it ‘is’?

§ XXXI

The goddess’ approach, or so I would suggest, is very different. When she tells us, in verses following her statement of the second way (fr. 2.7-8): “What is not (τό [...] μὴ ἔόν), you could not know, nor could you tell it to others”, she does not intend us to take that substantivised participle (τὸ μὴ ἔόν) as subject of the verb which she has just condemned as leading nowhere (fr. 2.5): “is not” (οὐκ ἔστι). Nor does she mean “what is not” to be added as a subject to the verb of the first way: “is” (ἔστι), since the use of that verb has been condemned, in one and the same breath almost, by her statement (fr. 2.5): “it is necessary not to be.”

Her point, I would suggest, is precisely that, since we cannot know ‘what is not’, we cannot say anything about it. If we say that it *is*, we abandon the second way (“is not”) for the first (“is”). If we say that it *is not*, we are only saying the same thing twice: *is not, non-being*. For verb and participle are merely alternative ways of expressing one and the same impossibility, and one and the same necessity: the impossibility of saying ‘not to be’ (if you follow the first way), the necessity of saying ‘not to be’ (if you follow the second way).

In speaking of the second way, the goddess does therefore utter both a noun (or at least a substantivised participle: τὸ μὴ ἔόν) and a verb (οὐκ ἔστι). But we are not intended to join those two expressions in a single proposition: *what is not, is not*. Verb and noun stand as independent expres-

¹²⁸ See again Cordero (1979) 6 and 15 (quoted § xxviii above).

¹²⁹ Kranz, in Diels and Kranz (1934) 231. Diels had translated more soberly, (1922) 152: “*es nicht ist.*”

¹³⁰ Riverso (1966) 221 (quoted § xxviii above).

¹³¹ Tarán (1977) 662 n. 30.

sions of the second way: the second way, *is not*, leads nowhere, because you cannot know *what is not*.

§ XXXII

The same is not at all true of the first way. For the ‘heart’ of the goddess’ message (*cf.* fr. 1.29) hangs precisely on the difference between the two ways, on the point that the second way leads nowhere, whereas the first way leads somewhere—namely to *what is*.

But that difference, that profound difference, should not be allowed to mask the point that, even so, from a purely grammatical point of view, both paths start off in the same way, by the utterance of a simple verb (ἔστί), or its negation (οὐκ ἔστί), with no subject, and with no complement. For in her initial statement of the two ways in fr. 2, as in her recapitulation of the two ways in the *krisis* of fr. 8.15-18, the goddess is content to express the first way by use of a simple verb: ἔστί, just as in her statement of the second way, in those same two places, she says simply: οὐκ ἔστί. In fr. 2, as in fr. 8.15-18, the positive use of the verb (ἔστί) is no more endowed with a subject than is the negation of that same verb (οὐκ ἔστί) used to express the second way.

But the reason for the absence of a subject is not the same. We refuse the second way *is not*, because we cannot know *what is not*. Almost the opposite is true of the first way. Because we say *is*, we therefore think of *what is*. Indeed the two expressions can be joined in a single sentence, as in the opening verse of fr. 6: “It is necessary to say this, and to think this, namely that there is being” (ἐὸν ἔμμεναι).

If I dare elaborate on the assumption underlying this development in the expression of the first way: we can no more assert *is* and not think of *what is*, then we could assert ‘runs’ or ‘walks’ or ‘swims’ without thinking of a subject to the verb: a runner, a walker, a swimmer.

The result is not, as Guthrie fears and as Owen claims, a tautology.¹³² The positive use of the verb, I suspect the goddess would claim, requires a subject, precisely because, if we think *is*, we think, not of *what is not*, but of *what is*...

§ XXXIII

But for the moment I suggest, reluctantly, that we renounce the adventures that await the determined seeker in his pursuit of *what is*, in order to look back, not to the second way, but to the opinions of mortals, and to their false belief that “things that are not, are” (fr. 7.1: εἶναι μὴ ἔόντα).

¹³² Guthrie (1965) 15-20. Owen (1960) 90. *Cf.* § xxvii above.

For with the interpretation that I have outlined, the difference—the chasm—that separates the ‘third’ way from both the first way and the second leaps to the eye. The ‘opinions of mortals’ are expressed in the form of a proposition, with both a subject and a verb, and therefore totally unlike the statement of the first and the second way in fr. 2.

Moreover, the proposition “things that are not, are” cannot be taken as a development of the second way, as an explication of *is not*, somehow analogous to “there is being” or “being is” (cf. fr. 6.1: ἐὼν ἔμμεναι), taken as an explication of the first way. For what makes the proposition “things that are not, are” at once call for condemnation from the goddess (she continues, fr. 7.2: “But do you turn away your thought from this way of enquiry”), is not only that the way of mortals includes, albeit in the plural, the forbidden *what is not*. Even more disastrously, the forbidden *what is not* has here been added to the statement of the first way: *is*.

The third way is therefore an impossible hybrid. By joining the two expressions “things that are not” (μὴ ἑόντα) and the verb of the first way “is” (fr. 2.3: ἔσται, cf. fr. 7.1: εἶναι), mortals have failed to realise that the two ways are incompatible. They fail to realise that, if we state the first way: “is” (ἔσται), then we are committed to the modal statement: *it is not possible not to be*, and therefore to a denial of *is not* and of *what is not*. Conversely, the statement “is not” (οὐκ ἔσται) carries with it the claim that *it is necessary not to be*, and makes it impossible therefore to claim *is*.

The first way makes it impossible, even if what we want to say is that they *are* (εἶναι), to speak of *things that are not* (μὴ ἑόντα). The second way makes it impossible to say, even of *things that are not* (μὴ ἑόντα), that they *are* (εἶναι).¹³³

Seen in this light, the belief of mortals, their claim that “things that are not, are”, far from being indistinguishable from the second way (as on Guthrie’s interpretation), sins equally against the first way and the second.¹³⁴

§ XXXIV

The modal incompatibility of the goddess’ initial two ways, “the only ones that can be thought of” (fr. 2.2), explains the unpardonable and impossible error that underlies the opinions of mortals. Parmenides’ mortals have failed to realise that the statement of the two ways ‘is’ and ‘is not’ implies a choice. The goddess requires us to choose either the impossibility or the necessity of ‘not to be’. We cannot have both, and we are therefore forbidden to say of ‘things that are not’ that ‘they are’.

¹³³ I know that those two sentences will have to be read twice to be intelligible. But it is worth the effort.

¹³⁴ For Guthrie’s failure to distinguish the second way from the ‘third’, see §§ xxiv–xxvi above; and for the reason for his failure, see § xxvii and § xxix above.

The Eleatic Stranger in Plato's *Sophist* refuses to be cowed. He takes up the cudgels, in order to defend precisely what the goddess has forbidden, when she condemns the opinions of mortals. Hence Plato's quotation of the opening verses of fr. 7 (condemnation of the claim that "things that are not, are") at the beginning and at the end of the Stranger's criticism of Parmenides (237A8-9 and 258D2-3).

But what the Stranger does not do, is attempt to lift the condemnation of non-being as it is expressed in the goddess' original statement of the two ways in fr. 2. As we have seen, the Stranger insists, no less vehemently than the goddess had done, that we cannot think or speak of "what is not in any way at all" (τὸ μηδαμῶς ὄν, 237B7-8), of "what just simply is not" (τὸ μὴ ὄν αὐτὸ καθ' αὐτό, 238C9).¹³⁵

In the eyes of the goddess, the Stranger's *endorsement* of the condemnation of non-being in fr. 2, coupled with his *failure to endorse* the goddess' condemnation of the claim that 'things that are not, are' in fr. 7, would have seemed impossibly paradoxical. The paradox is essential to our understanding of the structure of the *Sophist*, and no less essential for our understanding of the complex relationship between the poem of Parmenides and Plato's *Sophist*.

But to grasp that paradox, we need to distinguish, within the *Sophist*, successive moments in the Stranger's critique of Parmenides. From a study of the text of the poem of Parmenides, we need therefore to turn again to a study of the text of Plato's *Sophist*.

Part four

§ XXXV

In their search for a definition of the Sophist, Theaetetus and the Stranger from Elea have stumbled upon the problem of falsehood (*Soph.* 236D8-7A2). That in turn has raised the problem of non-being. For the *logos* which claims that we can say or 'opine' what is false is a *logos* which "has dared to lay down that what is not, is" (237A3-4). "In no other way," so the Stranger tells Theaetetus (237A4), "could a falsehood come to have being."¹³⁶

The stage is at once set for Parmenides. The *logos* which dares to claim that "what is not, is" (237A3-4: τὸ μὴ ὄν εἶναι) is obviously the same as the statement that Parmenides' goddess had given of the opinions of mortals, with the difference only that Parmenides' goddess had spoken, not of non-

¹³⁵ *Soph.* 237B10-C4. See § xiv above.

¹³⁶ I repeat Cornford's deft translation, (1935) 200, of *Soph.* 237A4: ψεῦδος γὰρ οὐκ ἂν ἄλλως ἐγίγνετο ὄν.

being in the singular ('what is not, is'), but of non-beings in the plural, of the belief that "things that are not, are" (fr. 7.1: εἶναι μὴ ἔόντα).¹³⁷

That coincidence between the definition of falsehood as given in the *Sophist* and Parmenides' own statement of the opinions of mortals determines the nature of the relationship that will be established in the *Sophist* between the Parmenides of Plato's dialogue and the Parmenides of history. For from that coincidence there follows the inevitable, if slightly unpalatable, conclusion that Parmenides will make his appearance in Plato's dialogue in defence of the Sophist, in so far as Parmenides' denial of the 'third way', and of the belief that 'things that are not, are', will be adduced as a denial of the possibility of falsehood in thought or opinion, and as a denial therefore of any definition of the Sophist as a purveyor of falsehood.¹³⁸

§ XXXVI

But from this moment onwards (237A3 sqq.), the overall strategy of the dialogue risks being lost to sight. Parmenides (I repeat) is introduced in defence of the Sophist, in so far as his denial of the existence of non-being (his denial of the claim that "things that are not, are", fr. 7.1) is introduced by the Eleatic Stranger as a denial of the possibility of falsehood, and therefore as a denial of any definition of the Sophist as a purveyor of falsehood. Since the Stranger aims to prove that the Sophist is a liar and father of lies, his ultimate aim must therefore be to free himself from Parmenides' condemnation of the opinions of mortals. Nonetheless, in the pages immediately following his first quotation from Parmenides' poem (237A4-9), the Stranger does not at once set out to overthrow Parmenides' argument.

Readers who have been trained to see in Plato's *Sophist* a thoroughgoing refutation of Parmenides are likely to be thrown off course by the Stranger's

¹³⁷ On the difference between singular (237A3: τὸ μὴ ὄν) and plural (237A8, quoting Parmenides, fr. 7.1: μὴ ἔόντα), see the footnote following this.

¹³⁸ *Soph.* 237A3-9. In this passage, the Stranger repeats Parmenides' plural: μὴ ἔόντα (237A8, quoting Parmenides, fr. 7.1) as a singular: τὸ μὴ ὄν (237A3). The difference between singular and plural, although I earlier spoke of it as a 'fragile' defence (if called upon to explain the difference between Parmenides' second way and the opinions of mortals, see § xxv above), is nonetheless not nugatory. It is true that the Stranger will later speak, on his own account, of 'things that are not', in the plural, both in his denial that 'number' can be added to 'what is not' (given both as a singular and a plural: 238B10-C4), and in the paradigm that he gives of a *logos* that is false (240E10-1A1). But Parmenides' use of the plural (fr. 7.1) originally had a quite different purpose: in Parmenides' poem, the 'things that are not', in the plural, are the many changing things which we think to see and feel in the world around us, as opposed to the changeless single being which is presented by the goddess as the goal of the first way. For Parmenides, singular and plural are not therefore interchangeable: if Plato's Stranger moves from singular to plural, Parmenides' goddess, in her account of the opinions of mortals, does not move from plural (fr. 7.1: 'things that are not, are') to singular ('what is not, is').—Commentators commonly fail to recognise the distinction, and attribute to Parmenides a use of the singular, which is nowhere to be found in the fragments. See, for example, Notomi (1999) 2: "Parmenides, in his verse [presumably fr. 7.1-2], strongly opposed 'what is not *is*'." Notomi's seemingly casual slip is a sign of worse things to come. See §§ XLVIII-LIV below.

reticence. Their disarray is understandable. For when, many pages later, the Stranger repeats his quotation of the same two verses from Parmenides (fr. 7.1-2, 258D2-3; cf. 237A8-9), he will indeed announce, triumphantly and emphatically, that Parmenides' thesis has been overturned, not only because it has now been demonstrated that "things that are not, are", but still more by the discovery of a "form that is, of what is not" (258D5-7).¹³⁹

But that is not at all what happens in the earlier passage. When he first quotes from Parmenides' poem (237A8-9), the Stranger does not follow his quotation with an immediate denial of Parmenides' thesis. Quite the contrary. In a *first* pair of arguments, immediately following his initial quotation from the poem, the Stranger will set out to *support* Parmenides.¹⁴⁰ It is only in a *second* and *subsequent* series of arguments, leading up to his second quotation of those same verses from Parmenides' poem, that he will set out to *refute* Parmenides.¹⁴¹

§ XXXVII

The Stranger's *volte face* is clearly marked out, for those who have eyes to see and ears to hear, by successive and antagonistic uses, at the beginning of each set of arguments, of a metaphor taken from the language of the law-courts.

The metaphor will, however, be unfamiliar to many (alas, not all) modern readers of the dialogue, and especially to those who have been brought

¹³⁹ Plato writes, *Soph.* 258D6: τὸ εἶδος ὃ τυγχάνει ὄν τοῦ μὴ ὄντος. Literally translated this will be: "the form which happens to be of what is not", or "the form that there turns out to be of what is not". Τυγχάνει is a personal use of the verb, and the subject, *via* the relative pronoun ὃ, is τὸ εἶδος, but the meaning implied, in this context, is less that of a *chance* happening than that of something that *turned up* or *turned out* to be so. That latter idea is more naturally expressed, in English, by a so-called impersonal use of the verb. Hence my alternative translation: "the form that there turns out to be".—But that is only a minor difficulty. Unfortunately, either form of words ("the form which happens to be" or "the form that there turns out to be") masks, in English, the crucial paradox, expressed in Greek by the association of ὄν and μὴ ὄντος, since the English infinitive *be* has not the same sound as the third person of the indicative *is*. To preserve the obvious verbal paradox, I therefore frequently quote the Stranger's expression, as I have done in the sentence to which this note is attached, in an abbreviated fashion: a "form that *is*, of what *is not*". But of course I do so with the greatest reluctance, for by missing out the principal verb, we miss out on the Stranger's pretty little touch, which is meant to convey something like: "Well goodness me, look what we have on our hands...", or perhaps: "And just guess what has turned up—a form that *is* of what *is not*!"

¹⁴⁰ *Soph.* 237B2-E7 and 238A1-C11.

¹⁴¹ *Soph.* 241D5 sqq. In the sections which follow (§§ xxxvii-lxvii) I shall comment briefly on successive passages taken from five consecutive Stephanus pages (237A-41D). The quotation from Parmenides (237A3-B2) is followed by two, cumulative arguments which tell in favour of Parmenides: 237B2-E7 and 238A1-C11. The second argument leads to an *impasse*: 238D1-9C8. This allows the Sophist to re-introduce the question of images: 239C9-240C6, and of falsehood: 240C7-1B3. There follows a cleverly worded transition, where Theaetetus is almost tempted to give up the chase altogether: 241B4-D4, before we arrive at the second series of arguments, designed as refutation of Parmenides: 241D5 sqq. (Of course all these sections overlap; Plato is writing a dialogue, not a handbook.)

up to believe in *The Glory That Was Greece* and *The Grandeur That Was Rome*.¹⁴² For the metaphor reminds us of one of the seamier sides of life in ancient Athens, namely the torture that was systematically applied to slaves who were called upon to give evidence in the law-courts.¹⁴³ For it is this practice which is implied when, in the *Sophist*, the Stranger's first pair of arguments is introduced by the twin notions of 'bearing testimony' and of a *logos* being 'tortured'.¹⁴⁴ And it is the same practice that is implied when the Stranger and Theaetetus agree to 'torture' a *logos* at the outset of the second sequence of arguments, which will continue until almost the end of the dialogue.¹⁴⁵

The metaphor implied in both passages is that the *logos* is being treated as a slave, who has to be tortured in order to be made to tell the truth and to bear witness, if necessary, against his master. But the crucial point, and the point which has escaped more than one reader of the dialogue, is that the *logos* which is subject to torture, in these two successive passages, is not the same. The first *logos* is the *logos* which Parmenides had denied, namely the belief of mortals, the belief that 'things that are not, are'. The second *logos* will be the *logos* of Parmenides himself.¹⁴⁶

The first *logos*, the *logos* which Parmenides has denied, in being forced to give evidence against his master, and therefore against the thesis that "things that are not, are" (fr. 7.1), will lead to a decision, albeit a temporary decision, *in favour of* Parmenides.¹⁴⁷

The second *logos*, the *logos* of Parmenides himself, in being forced to give evidence against Parmenides, will lead, on the contrary, to *refutation of* Parmenides, in so far as it will lead to recognition of the possibility of false-

¹⁴² For these two titles, see Stobart (1911) and Stobart (1912).

¹⁴³ See Wyse and Adcock, (1931) 486 (§ 503): "The evidence of slaves could only be given under torture." There is abundant evidence in the orators. For the confidence Demosthenes claims to place on evidence given under torture, see *Contra Aphobum III* (*Oratio* 29), cap. 5, and *Contra Onetorem I* (*Oratio* 30), cap. 37. Aristotle weighs up the *pros* and the *cons*, *Rhet.* i 15, 1376b31-7a7.

¹⁴⁴ The first pair of arguments: *Soph.* 237B2-E7 and 238A1-C11. 'Bearing testimony': see ἀπεμαρτύρατο, 237A6, and μαρτυρεῖται, 237B1. 'Torture' of the first *logos*: see βασιανισθεῖς, 237B2.

¹⁴⁵ The second sequence of arguments: *Soph.* 241D5 sqq. 'Torture' of the second *logos*: see βασιανίζειν, 241D6.

¹⁴⁶ Sensitive readers may flinch at my writing of torture in the context of the *Sophist*. It is true of course that βασιανίζω can be used in less stressful contexts, of 'testing' gold for example (see L. S. J., s.v., § 1), and that this is often the application of the word in other parts of the Platonic corpus (see Ast [1835-1836], s.v. [vol. i, pp. 337-8]). But in conjunction with ἀπεμαρτύρατο (237A6) and μαρτυρεῖται (237B1) the word is plainly being used, in these two places of the *Sophist* (237B2 and 241D6), to allude to the common practice of slaves being made to give evidence under torture (see L. S. J., s.v. βασιανίζω, § 2; cf. s.v. στρεβλόω, § 2). See, on this same point, § XLIV below.

¹⁴⁷ The Stranger clearly implies (237B1-2) that the evidence given under torture concurs with the 'testimony' given by Parmenides against the first *logos*. It will follow that the first *logos*, under torture, bears witness against himself, or against his master. See, on this point, § XLV below.

hood, and so to the possibility of a definition of the Sophist as a purveyor of falsehood.¹⁴⁸

§ XXXVIII

But to follow that distinction aright, we need to overcome one major preliminary hurdle. For, at the very moment when the name of Parmenides first falls from the Stranger's lips, the modern reader risks finding the meaning of the passage obscured, not only by his lack of familiarity with slavery and torture, but by the presence of an adversary more insidious, and yet no less potent. For the meaning of this crucial passage has been obscured—*horresco referens!*—by the twin guardians of the temple of Greek lexicography, Liddell and Scott.

"The great Parmenides", so the Stranger tells Theaetetus, immediately prior to his first quotation of fr. 7.1-2, τοῦτο ἀπεμαρτύρατο (237A6). The demonstrative τοῦτο (object of the verb) is most simply taken as referring to the *logos* stated in the sentence preceding (237A3-4), and therefore to the *logos* which claims that 'what is not, is', the *logos* which the Stranger has presented as a paradigm of falsehood.¹⁴⁹ What then is the meaning of ἀπεμαρτύρατο?

If we look up Liddell and Scott, the only occurrence quoted for the compound verb (ἀπο + μαρτύρομαι) is our present passage from the *Sophist*.¹⁵⁰ The meaning given is "maintain stoutly".¹⁵¹ With that translation, and with τοῦτο referring to the *logos* preceding, the words with which the Stranger introduces his quotation will have to mean that Parmenides "maintained stoutly" the thesis that "what is not, is".¹⁵²

¹⁴⁸ Although I have spoken of the Stranger's *volte face* (at the beginning of this section), nonetheless the Stranger will not entirely disown the arguments that he had initially brought forward in favour of Parmenides (237B2-8C11). For the Stranger's admission that we cannot think or speak of "what is not in any way at all" (237B7-8: τὸ μηδ' αὖτως ὄν) will re-surface, much later in the dialogue, as the admission that we cannot think or speak of an impossible 'contrary' to being (cf. τοῦναντίον and ἐναντίον at 258E6 and 8). The Stranger's point will be that, despite the impossibility of conceiving of any Parmenidean contrary to being, there is another, and quite different, meaning of 'what is not', which will establish, against Parmenides' monism, a real multiplicity of beings, and which will also establish the possibility of falsehood in both speech and thought. But to make sense of that impossibly abbreviated summary of the Stranger's purpose, the reader really will have to turn to O'Brien (1995). See also §§ LXXV-LXXVI below, where I give a suitably qualified account of the Stranger's 'refutation' of Parmenides.

¹⁴⁹ The constructions used with μαρτύρομαι vary considerably. A neat summary of classical usage will be found in Kittel, (1933-1979), s.v. ἐπιμαρτυρέω κ.τ.λ. (Band iv, p. 517.4-26). In our passage (ἀπεμαρτύρατο, 237A6), as in the *Philebus* (ἐμαρτυράμεθα, 47C7-D1), the accusative (τοῦτο in the *Sophist*, ταῦτα in the *Philebus*) indicates, not the person called as witness, but what it is that the speaker claims to give testimony of.

¹⁵⁰ See L. S. J., s.v. ἀπομαρτύρομαι.

¹⁵¹ L. S. J., *ibid.*

¹⁵² The entry in L. S. J. is merely repeated in Adrados, (1991) 437 (s.v. ἀπομαρτύρομαι): "*mantener firmamente*".

§ XXXIX

From a philosophical point of view, that is obviously not possible. Parmenides, in the verses quoted (fr. 7.1-2), explicitly warns us against accepting the belief that 'things that are not, are'.¹⁵³ That thesis the Stranger has presented (237A3-7) as identical to the thesis that 'what is not, is'. Parmenides cannot be introduced as defending such a thesis, much less as defending it 'stoutly'.

Liddell and Scott, I therefore make so bold as to suggest, have confused two separate meanings of the preposition ἄπο-, forming part of a compound verb. By translating ἀπομαρτύρομαι as "maintain stoutly", they have taken the preposition as 'strengthening' the sense of the simple verb, with the impossible consequence that Parmenides is said to "maintain stoutly" the very thesis which the two verses quoted from his poem set out to deny.¹⁵⁴

But fortunately that is not the only possible meaning of the verb. The preposition (ἄπο-) has another and quite different use, that of adding a negative connotation to the simple verb.¹⁵⁵ It is this meaning that is required by the context of the *Sophist*. The point of Plato's ἀπεμαρτύρατο will be that Parmenides bears witness *against* the *logos* which would claim that 'what is not, is' (or that 'things that are not, are').¹⁵⁶

§ XL

Lexicographers may jib at that conclusion. For although Liddell and Scott quote only a single occurrence of ἀπομαρτύρομαι, the closely related verb ἀπομαρτυρέω is not infrequently used in the active voice by later writers, notably Polybius.¹⁵⁷ All these active uses of ἀπομαρτυρέω do turn out to be

¹⁵³ After uttering the words, fr. 7.1: εἶναι μὴ ἔόντα, the goddess continues, in the second of the two verses quoted by the Stranger, fr. 7.2: "But do you turn away your thought from this way of enquiry."

¹⁵⁴ For this meaning of ἄπο-, see L. S. J., s.v., D 4: "Freq[ue]ntly it only strengthens the sense of the simple."

¹⁵⁵ L. S. J., s.v. ἀπό, D 6: "Almost = ἀ- priv[ative]." See also Chantraine, (1968), s.v. ἀπό (p. 97): "*Le sens peut devenir privatif, négatif, ἀπαγορεύω 'défendre', ἀπαρέσχω 'déplaire', ἀπανδᾶω 'refuser'.*" See also the footnote at the end of this section.

¹⁵⁶ The two, almost contradictory, meanings of ἄπο- are noted by Schwyzler and Debrunner, (1959) 431, who speak of a "*negative Funktion*" and an "*intensivierende* [sc. *Funktion*]". Smyth, (1956) 374 (§ 1684.2), has a good stab at explaining the seeming contradiction. The underlying meaning of separation (e.g. λείπω, 'I leave'; ἀπολείπω, 'I leave behind') can be seen as issuing either in a completion of the action (e.g. τελέω, 'I bring to an end'; ἀποτελέω, 'I bring to a complete end') or in a negation of the action (e.g. μανθάνω, 'I learn'; ἀπομανθάνω, 'I unlearn'). (These are not Smyth's examples.) Exceptionally, the same word can have both meanings (for different authors and at different times). For example, μῆνίω, 'be wroth against' (L. S. J., s.v.); ἀπομῆνίω, 'be very wroth' (L. S. J., s.v. § i), 'cease from wroth' (L. S. J., s.v. § ii).

¹⁵⁷ Polybius, *Historiae* xxx 31.20, quoted by L. S. J., s.v. ἀπομαρτυρέω. See also *Historiae* xxxi 10.4 and xxxi 20.2. Add Plutarch, *De malignitate Herodoti* xxii, 860 C (*sub finem*).

merely a ‘strengthened’ synonym of the simple verb.¹⁵⁸ Why then, it will be objected, should we make an exception for Plato’s use of ἀπομαρτύρομαι?¹⁵⁹

On the contrary, the immediate context of the verb in Plato (*Soph.* 237A4-7), it may well be objected, lends itself very easily to a ‘strengthened’ form of the verb, perhaps not so much the idea of ‘maintaining stoutly’ as the idea of ‘persistence’ in maintaining.

For example, Achilles, in the *Iliad*, sulks in his tent. At first (*Il.* ii 769), we are told simply: μῆνιεν. “He was angry”, “he was sulking”. But only three verses later (*Il.* ii 772) we hear: κεῖτ’ ἀπομηνίσας. The point is not so much that Achilles passed from a simple sulk to a ‘great sulk’, as that he kept on sulking, for days and days, indeed until the very day that he was roused to action by news of the death of Patroclus...¹⁶⁰

So too, in the *Sophist* (237A4-7), the Stranger tells us that “from start to finish” (ἀρχόμενός τε καὶ διὰ τέλους), “day in and day out” (ἐκάστοτε), the great Parmenides ἀπεμαρτύρατο. The imperfect here comes into its own: Parmenides continually asserted, he continually bore witness.

In both texts, it will be said, the preposition ‘strengthens’ the simple verb, not by adding *intensity* to the action, but by emphasising the *duration* of the activity, the *persistence* of the agent.¹⁶¹

¹⁵⁸ To the examples quoted by L. S. J., s.v. ἀπομαρτυρέω, can be added a handful of other texts, easily recoverable from the computerised *Thesaurus linguae graecae*.

¹⁵⁹ On the relation between the two un-compounded verbs (μαρτύρομαι and μαρτυρέω), see the footnote placed at the end of this section.

¹⁶⁰ L. S. J., s.v. ἀπομηνίω, § 1, give both meanings, apparently for the same passage: “to be very wroth, persevere in wroth”. The difference in meaning, though admittedly narrow, is nonetheless a real one.

¹⁶¹ The relation of the deponent verb μαρτύρομαι (with a long υ) and of the contracted verb μαρτυρέω (with a short υ) is not an easy one. For the origin of the double form, and of the difference in quantity of the vowel, see Curtius, (1880) 260-1; cf. 269. The two verbs are not simply synonyms, but in some uses their meanings obviously overlap. See, for example, L. S. J., s.v. μαρτυρέω, § 13: “[c]um acc[usativo] rei, testify to a thing”, compared with L. S. J., s.v. μαρτύρομαι, § 3: “protest, asseverate”, given with ταῦτα as object (the reference is to the passage from the *Philebus*, 47C7-D1, quoted in the first footnote of the section preceding this). The close relationship between the two verbs is apparent in our present passage, where ἀπεμαρτύρατο (237A6) is followed almost immediately by μαρτυρεῖται (237B1). The latter verb (μαρτυρεῖται, 237B1), from the point of view purely of form, could be taken as the future tense of μαρτύρομαι (see L. S. J., s.v. μαρτύρομαι, where the future is given as μαρτυροῦμαι, with a short υ). But in this context, preceded as it is by παρ’ ἐκείνου (237B1), the form must be the present passive of μαρτυρέω (cf. L. S. J., s.v., § 19). Therefore, in our passage (237A4-B2), the same ‘event’, the testimony given by Parmenides, is referred to, within the space of only a couple of lines, by a compound of μαρτύρομαι (237A6: ἀπεμαρτύρατο) and by μαρτυρέω (237B1: μαρτυρεῖται). But, despite the two verbs (ἀπεμαρτύρατο, 237A6; μαρτυρεῖται, 237B1) obviously being heard as close semantic neighbours, it does not follow that their meaning is the same. See the first footnote in § XLIV below.

§ XLI

That argument has a certain appeal. But if we are to yield to its siren voices, then it becomes more than ever important to recognise that, with a positive meaning of the preposition (ἀπομαρτύρομαι, 'to maintain stoutly', 'to persist in maintaining'), the object of the verb cannot be the claim that 'what is not, is'.

If Plato's use of ἀπομαρτύρομαι is to have the same positive connotation as later writers' use of ἀπομαρτυρέω in the active voice, then the pronoun which Plato gives as object of the verb (τοῦτο) will have to be taken as a forward-looking demonstrative, and therefore as referring, not to the *logos* which has already been stated (the claim that 'what is not, is'), but to Parmenides' denial of that *logos* in the quotation that will follow. For Parmenides' evidence is here given *against* the thesis which would make falsehood possible, and so *against* the thesis that 'what is not, is'.

It may possibly be that that connotation is sufficiently indicated by the run of the argument, and that the meaning of ἀπομαρτύρομαι is indeed, as for ἀπομαρτυρέω in later writers, no more than a strengthened form of the simple verb, with therefore, in our text (*Soph.* 237A6), a very awkward forward-looking use of the demonstrative (τοῦτο).

Personally, I prefer to credit Plato with a use of ἀπομαρτύρομαι which admittedly happens not to be paralleled elsewhere in the extant literature, but which would correspond nicely to other uses of ἀπο- in compound verbs that are well attested for the Greek of the period: δοκιμαζω 'approve', ἀποδοκιμαζω 'reject'; τιμάω 'honour', ἀποτιμάω 'dishonour'; καταψηφίζομαι 'condemn', ἀποψηφίζομαι 'acquit'; καταγιγνώσκω 'accept', ἀπογιγνώσκω 'reject'.

So too, I would suggest: μαρτύρομαι 'give testimony', ἀπομαρτύρομαι 'give hostile testimony'/'give testimony against'. Parmenides "gave testimony *against* this" (237A6: τοῦτο ἀπεμαρτύρατο), namely *against* the thesis which dared to declare that 'what is not, is' (237A3-4).¹⁶²

¹⁶² Perhaps we should not exclude the possibility that the idea of duration is added to the negative meaning of the verb: Parmenides '*persistently testified against* this'. But, in our present passage, Parmenides' persistence in his hostile testimony is more than adequately catered for by the tense of the verb and by the two expressions (237A4-7), ἀρχόμενός τε καὶ διὰ τέλους, ἀποπέμποτε.—The force of the middle voice (even for a deponent verb, which grammarians like to tell us is 'active' in meaning) I take to be that, in giving hostile testimony, one *dissociates oneself* from the claim that is being made. So we find ἀπωθέω used in the middle voice, ἀπωθέομαι, to mean not merely 'push away', but 'push away from oneself', and so 'repulse', ἀποπέμπομαι, not merely 'send away', but 'send away from oneself', ἀποσειόμαι, not merely 'shake loose', but 'shake off', 'shake oneself free from', ἀποτίθεμαι not merely 'put away', but 'put away from oneself'. Similarly, or so I would suggest: ἀπομαρτύρομαι, 'give evidence dissociating oneself from', and therefore 'give hostile evidence', 'give evidence against'.

§ XLII

There remains one final twist to the argument. Is τοῦτο (237A6: τοῦτο ἀπεμαρτύρατο) the innocent little word that it appears to be?

In forensic speeches, the demonstrative (in the masculine, not the neuter) has a semi-technical use, which Liddell and Scott define as follows: “In Att[ic] law-language, οὗτος is commonly applied to *the opponent*, whether plaintiff [...] or defendant.”¹⁶³

This technical usage would answer perfectly to the meaning that I suggest for ἀπεμαρτύρατο. Parmenides bears witness *against the opponent*, namely the *logos* which claims that ‘what is not, is’ or that ‘things that are not, are’.

But is that perhaps reading too much into Plato’s legal metaphor? Shall I be told that the conjunction of the two words, in our present passage (237A6: τοῦτο ἀπεμαρτύρατο), is a mere fluke?

§ XLIII

To satisfy the more sceptical reader, and to avoid the danger of being dazzled by detail, let me return to the use of τοῦτο in the context of the passage as a whole.

The demonstrative appears first in the Stranger’s opening statement of the thesis that ‘what is not, is’ (237A3: ὁ λόγος οὗτος), secondly in the Stranger’s introduction to his quotation from Parmenides (237A6: τοῦτο ἀπεμαρτύρατο), and finally in the quotation itself, in the first of the two verses quoted from Parmenides’ poem (fr. 7.1: τοῦτο), where the pronoun looks forward to the statement, given in that same verse, of the opinions of mortals (fr. 7.1: ‘things that are not, are’).

With a *negative* meaning for ἀπεμαρτύρατο, the reference of the demonstrative will be the same in all three sentences. In all three sentences (οὗτος, 237A3; τοῦτο, 237A6; and again τοῦτο, fr. 7.1 = 237A8), the demonstrative will refer to the claim that ‘what is not, is’ or that ‘things that are not, are’. In the second sentence of the three (237A4-7), the point will be that Parmenides’ witness is given *against* that thesis.

If, on the contrary, the verb is to have a *positive* connotation, then τοῦτο at 237A6 can no longer have the same reference as οὗτος at 237A3 or as the τοῦτο of fr. 7.1. Instead, it will have to look forward to the ‘message’ of Parmenides’ quotation taken as a whole. The meaning will have to be that Parmenides testified in favour of the *denial* that what is not, is.

Personally I find it far simpler to suppose that the negative connotation required by the context is already inscribed in the preposition of the compound verb. As before: Parmenides “gave testimony *against* this” (τοῦτο

¹⁶³ L. S. J., s.v. οὗτος, C, § 14.

ἀπεμαρτύρατο, 237A6), namely *against* the thesis which dared to declare that 'what is not, is' (237A3-4).¹⁶⁴

§ XLIV

The uncompounded form of the closely related verb μαρτυρέω is used in the sentence immediately following the Stranger's quotation. "Testimony", he tells us, "is given by none other than Parmenides" (my free translation of 237B1, designed to bring out the force of the demonstrative: παρ' ἐκείνου τε οὖν μαρτυρεῖται). It is clear, from the context, that Parmenides' 'testimony' is, here again, given against the thesis that "things that are not, are".¹⁶⁵

The language of the law-courts is continued in the sentence following. "The *logos* itself," so the Stranger tells Theaetetus, "will be likely to bring out the truth once it has been subject to only a mild degree of torture" (cf. 237B2: ὁ λόγος αὐτὸς ἂν δηλώσειε μέτρια βασανισθείς).¹⁶⁶

It is true that the verb I have translated as 'being subject to torture' (βασανίζω, cf. 237B2: βασανισθείς) can be used in other contexts (of 'testing' gold, for example). But the repeated reference to 'bearing witness', in the same sentence and in the sentence preceding (ἀπεμαρτύρατο, 237A6; μαρτυρεῖται, 237B1), plus the presence of the adverb (237B2: μέτρια, "mildly"), which would have little point if the meaning of the verb were simply 'test' or 'evaluate', leaves no doubt that we have to do here with the

¹⁶⁴ Cornford has seen the point. He translates, (1935) 200: "The great Parmenides [...] testified against this." Campbell too is on the right track. He translates, in his note, (1867) 82 n. 1: "Uttered his testimony against this." But the explanation he gives shows that he has attempted to combine the right meaning with an impossible syntax. He writes, *ibid.*: "τοῦτο ἀπεμαρτύρατο, sc. μὴ τὸ μὴ ὄν εἶναι." With a negative meaning for the preposition, there is no need for Campbell's (hopelessly intrusive) initial μὴ. Later translators simply muff the point (Cordero [1993] 124: τοῦτο ἀπεμαρτύρατο, "*Parménide [...] témoignait de cela*"), or merely paraphrase (White [1993] 25: there is nothing in the translation to represent τοῦτο at all).

¹⁶⁵ The verb μαρτυρεῖται I take to be here an impersonal use of the passive. See L. S. J., s.v. μαρτυρέω, § 19.—It will perhaps be objected, against my proposed translation of ἀπεμαρτύρατο, that μαρτυρεῖται (237B1) and ἀπεμαρτύρατο (237A6) are here plainly being used as synonyms, since both refer to the testimony given by Parmenides, and that ἀπεμαρτύρατο cannot therefore be opposed to μαρτυρεῖται as a negation of the positive meaning of what is virtually the same verb. (See the final footnote in § XL above.) But the two verbs, I would claim, are not opposed as positive and negative. The simple verb (μαρτυρέω or μαρτύρομαι) is neutral, and can refer to testimony *for* or *against*, depending on the context. The compound verb ἀπεμαρτύρατο (237A6) has already shown (what is in any case obvious from the context) that Parmenides' testimony is given *against* the claim that 'things that are not, are'; the simple verb (μαρτυρεῖται, 237B1) repeats that idea, taking its colour (the testimony given is hostile testimony) from the preceding use of the compound verb, and from the context in general.

¹⁶⁶ For this use of the optative with ἄν, see Goodwin (1897) 80 (§ 239). I translate 'bring out the truth' only to perpetuate the language of the law-courts. One could translate more simply: 'make things clear' or 'bring to light'.

common practice of torturing slaves, in the law courts, in order to make them give evidence.¹⁶⁷

But who or what—or perhaps I should rather say ‘whose’—is the *logos* that will be subject to torture? Who is the master that this ‘slave’ belongs to?

§ XLV

The Stranger’s use of λόγος at this point (237B2: ὁ λόγος αὐτὸς ἂν δηλώσειε μέτρια βασανισθείς), immediately following his quotation from Parmenides, obviously picks up from the use of the same word, λόγος, at 237A3, in the lines immediately preceding his quotation. “The *logos* itself” (237B2: ὁ λόγος αὐτός) which will be subject to torture (*ibid.*: βασανισθείς) is therefore the same as the *logos* (237A3: ὁ λόγος οὗτος) which had been invoked as a paradigm of falsehood, namely the claim that “what is not, is” (237A3-4: τὸ μὴ ὄν εἶναι).

Parmenides has already been introduced as giving testimony against that *logos*. The point therefore which we have now to appreciate is that the *logos* which will be ‘subject to torture’ is here being compared to the slave of the opposing party, the party which claims, against Parmenides, that ‘what is not, is’ (and therefore that falsehood is possible).

But now we come to the crucial point that I have already alluded to: will the slave give evidence for or against his master?¹⁶⁸

The Stranger says that “subject to only a mild degree of torture”, “the *logos* itself will be likely to bring out the truth” (*cf.* 237B2: ὁ λόγος αὐτὸς ἂν δηλώσειε μέτρια βασανισθείς). But the Stranger also clearly implies that the testimony given by Parmenides and the evidence given, under torture, by the *logos* concur.¹⁶⁹ Parmenides’ evidence is given against the *logos* which “has dared to claim that what is not, is”.¹⁷⁰ It must follow that the torture of the *logos* as witness will yield the same result. The *logos*, subject to torture, will be forced to admit that he, or that his master, was in the wrong, and that we cannot say that ‘what is not, is’ (or that ‘things that are not, are’).¹⁷¹

That point is essential to Plato’s scenario. When, subjected to torture, the *logos* is forced to ‘bring out the truth’ (*cf.* 237B2: ἂν δηλώσειε), the obvious, and indeed in this context the only possible, implication is that the *lo-*

¹⁶⁷ As already noted, § xxxvii above.

¹⁶⁸ *Cf.* § xxxvii above.

¹⁶⁹ I find it impossible to read in any other way the sentence, 237B1-2: παρ’ ἐκείνου [*sc.* Parmenides] τε οὖν μαρτυρεῖται, καὶ μάλιστα γὰρ δὴ πάντων ὁ λόγος αὐτὸς ἂν δηλώσειε μέτρια βασανισθείς. The conjunction of particles (τε οὖν followed by καὶ μάλιστα γὰρ δὴ) has clearly a cumulative, and not an adversative, purpose: the testimony given by Parmenides will be confirmed, and indeed reinforced (*cf.* μάλιστα γὰρ δὴ), by the evidence given under torture. For our passage, see Denniston (1966) 246 (*s.v.* γὰρ δὴ, [5]).

¹⁷⁰ See §§ xliii-xxxix above.

¹⁷¹ “What is not, is”: *Soph.* 237A3-4. “Things that are not, are”: Parmenides, fr. 7.1, *Soph.* 237A8.

gos will be forced to admit his master's error, with the result that Parmenides' condemnation of that error will be upheld.

I conclude that, in this first passage (237A3-B2), the point of the legal metaphor is that the *logos* which claims that 'what is not, is' stands condemned, refuted both by Parmenides' testimony against that *logos*, and by the admission of the opponent's slave who is forced, under torture, to acknowledge his master's guilt.¹⁷²

§ XLVI

But this first trial leads to an *impasse*. Denial of the *logos* which claims that 'what is not, is' is also a denial of the possibility of falsehood, and therefore a denial of any definition of the Sophist as a purveyor of falsehood.¹⁷³

The Stranger therefore now initiates a second trial (241D5 sqq.), where the *logos* 'subject to torture' will be none other than the *logos* of Parmenides himself.¹⁷⁴ The word used here is the same as the word that had been used to herald the Stranger's first pair of arguments, immediately following his quotation from Parmenides: βασιανίζειν, at 241D6, looks back to βασιανισθείς, at 237B2. But the application of the metaphor will now be entirely different.

The *logos* which had initially been 'subject to torture' (237B2) was the *logos* which claimed that 'what is not, is', i.e. the *logos* which Parmenides had condemned in the pair of verses that the Stranger had quoted from his poem.¹⁷⁵ As the result of undergoing only a 'mild degree' of torture (cf. 237B2: μέτρια βασιανισθείς), that *logos* has been forced to admit that no, we cannot think of "what is not in any way at all" (237B7-8), of "what just simply is not" (238C9).¹⁷⁶

Having wrung that admission from the first *logos*, the Stranger now (241D5 sqq.) sets out, in a second and separate session of 'torture', to prove that, nonetheless, Parmenides' outright condemnation of that thesis cannot

¹⁷² In writing of 'master' and 'slave', here as earlier, I am of course adding words that are not to be found in Plato's text. I do so, only in order to bring out the implication of the metaphor. As already noted: especially when combined with ἀπεμαρτύρατο (237A6) and μαρτυρεῖται (237B1), the Stranger's talking of 'torture' (237B2: βασιανισθείς) would have been an obvious allusion to the common practice in the law-courts of the time, where slaves gave evidence under torture in cases where their master's interests were at stake. See again Wyse and Adcock (1931) 486 (§ 503).

¹⁷³ See again (cf. §§ xxxv-xxxvii above) the Stranger's remarks leading up to his quotation of Parmenides: *Soph.* 236D8-7A4.

¹⁷⁴ I must again excuse myself for writing of a 'trial', and still more for writing of a 'second trial'. Neither word appears in Plato's text. My writing of a trial is intended merely to make explicit the background to 'giving testimony' (237A6; 237B1) and 'applying torture' (237B2; 241D6). But I would happily admit that, instead of thinking of a second trial, we could just as well (indeed perhaps better) imagine that the two sessions of torture take place in the context of a single trial, where the two parties present conflicting evidence.

¹⁷⁵ Parmenides, fr. 7.1-2, first quoted by the Stranger at *Soph.* 237A8-9.

¹⁷⁶ *Soph.* 237B2-8C11.

be maintained either, and that we must admit that “there is a sense in which what is not, is” (cf. 241D6-7: τό τε μὴ ὄν ὡς ἔστι κατὰ τι) and that “contrariwise, what is, in a way, is not” (cf. 241D7: καὶ τὸ ὄν αὖ πάλιν ὡς οὐκ ἔστι πᾶν).

§ XLVII

I return therefore to my initial point.¹⁷⁷ The two *logoi* which are subject to torture are not only different, but opposed.

The first *logos* (at 237A3 and 237B2) is the *logos* which Parmenides himself set out to refute, namely the *logos* which claims that ‘what is not, is’. Once that *logos* has been forced to admit that we cannot think or speak of ‘what is not’ (237B2-41B3), the *logos* which is then (241D5 sqq.) subject to ‘torture’, and forced to admit its error, or its guilt, is the *logos* of Parmenides himself, namely the *denial* of the thesis that ‘what is not, is’.

Denial of Parmenides’ own *logos* will lead to the admission that “there is a sense in which what is not, is” (cf. 241D6-7: τό τε μὴ ὄν ὡς ἔστι κατὰ τι), and thereby both to a recognition of a “form that is, of what is not”, and to the subsequent account of truth and falsehood, which will culminate in the Sophist’s downfall and capture.¹⁷⁸

¹⁷⁷ See §§ xxxv-xxxvii above.

¹⁷⁸ Recognition of a “form that is, of what is not”: *Soph.* 258D5-7. Truth and falsehood: *Soph.* 260B7-4B8. The Sophist’s downfall and capture: *Soph.* 264B9 sqq.—I am trying to keep my account as simple and as straightforward as possible. Nonetheless, it will not have escaped the reader’s notice that, in this section and in the section preceding this, I present the first *logos* as the claim that ‘what is not, is’ (cf. 237A3-4), or in the plural as the claim that ‘things that are not, are’ (fr. 7.1; cf. 237A8), whereas the admission forced from the first *logos* bears upon only one element in that proposition, namely the impossibility of our thinking or speaking of ‘what is not in any way at all’ (cf. 237B7-8). That distinction will be crucial (see esp. § LIII below). Let me only note, for the moment, that the claim made by the first *logos* that ‘what is not, is’ is taken to imply that we can and do think of ‘what is not’ (more specifically of ‘what is not in any way at all’), and that, conversely, the admission that we cannot think of ‘what is not’ (construed as ‘what is not in any way at all’) is therefore taken, at this stage in the dialogue (the first session of torture, cf. 237B2 sqq.), as implying that we cannot maintain the claim that ‘what is not, is’ or that ‘things that are not, are’. The difference between the two features of the first *logos* (the first *logos* taken as a proposition: ‘what is not, is’, and the first *logos* taken as implying the claim that we can think and speak of ‘what is not’) will become apparent only when the Stranger turns to torture of Parmenides’ own *logos* (241D5 sqq.). Put at its most simple: the Stranger will allow the claim that we cannot think and speak of ‘what is not in any way at all’, but he will force Parmenides to admit that nonetheless we do say of ‘what is not’ that it ‘is’ (or of ‘things that are not’ that they ‘are’). But it will be impossible to seize that simple distinction unless we have first clearly distinguished between the two *logoi*, and therefore between the two sessions of torture (237B2 sqq.; 241D5 sqq.).

Part five

§ XLVIII

If I have so laboured that point, it is because, although the repetition of the same verb 'torture' (βασανίζειν) at these two moments in the dialogue (237B2 and 241D6) is clearly intentional, and is indeed explicitly commented upon by Cornford, nonetheless commentators, new and old, have failed to follow Plato's plot.¹⁷⁹

Cornford had correctly observed that, in the pages immediately following his quotation of Parmenides (given by Cornford as "237B-9C"), "Plato is not criticising, but confirming" Parmenides' thesis.¹⁸⁰ Professor de Rijk lends his authority to this view: "Cornford (208) is quite right in pointing out that in all this section on 'what absolutely is not' Plato is confirming Parmenides and accepting his warning."¹⁸¹

Not so, according to the author of the most recent full-length study of the *Sophist*. Noburu Notomi repeats unchanged the counter-claim that was made nearly fifty years ago by Arthur Peck: "Plato," in the *Sophist*, "is condemning, not endorsing, Parmenides."¹⁸²

That will perhaps be true enough of the arguments following the decision to 'torture' Parmenides' own *logos*.¹⁸³ But it is clearly not true, as Notomi would have us believe, of the pair of arguments that follow immediately on the initial quotation from Parmenides and the decision that is then made to torture, not Parmenides' own *logos*, but the *logos* that Parmenides himself had condemned.

Why has Notomi failed to see that point?

§ XLIX

Part of the reason must be that Notomi presents a travesty of Cornford's view.

¹⁷⁹ For Cornford's comment on βασανισθείς, 237B2, and βασανίζειν, 241D6, see Cornford (1935) 200 n. 3. See also the reference in the footnote following this.

¹⁸⁰ Cornford (1935) 203. For the qualification ('more or less correctly'), see the footnote following this.

¹⁸¹ De Rijk, (1986) 90. I write of Cornford's comment as being only 'more or less' correct, simply because, within the pages that he has quoted ("237B-9C"), I would wish to distinguish a first pair of arguments which tell in favour of Parmenides (237B2-E7 and 238A1-C11) from the argument which follows (238D1-9C8) and which leads to an *impasse*: 'what is not', construed as 'what is not in any way at all', cannot be uttered, even by someone who aims to refute the claim that 'what is not, is'.

¹⁸² Notomi (1999) 177 n. 35. Peck (1952) 36. Peck's remark is specifically directed against Cornford, as quoted in the footnote but one preceding this.

¹⁸³ *Soph.* 241D5 sqq. For a more qualified view of Plato's 'condemnation', even after the decision to torture Parmenides' own *logos*, see §§ LXXV-LXXVI below.

When Cornford, as quoted above, wrote that “Plato is not criticising, but confirming” Parmenides’ thesis, he specifically limited his remark to the two arguments I have quoted (the two arguments immediately following the decision to torture the first *logos*: 237B2-E7 and 238A1-C11) and to the *aporia* which follows (238D1-9C8), while adding a similar remark, a page or two later, on the Stranger’s reference to a ‘contrary’ of being in the sentences immediately following his second quotation from Parmenides (258E6-9A1).¹⁸⁴ For Cornford does not claim that the Stranger never criticises Parmenides. Indeed he explicitly recognises that, from 241D1 onwards (and therefore from the beginning of the second session of torture), the Stranger ‘parts company’ with Parmenides.¹⁸⁵

Notomi’s bland assertion that “Cornford 1935, 203-209, is wrong when he insists that Plato [...] confirms and accepts Parmenides’ doctrine” obscures this point.¹⁸⁶ No reader of Notomi’s note could possibly guess that Cornford’s remark (“Plato is not criticising, but confirming” Parmenides’ thesis) had been limited to the specific passages that I have quoted.

But let us be grateful for small mercies. Notomi’s crude criticism of Cornford does at least make his own position clear. If Cornford is “wrong” in seeing confirmation of Parmenides’ thesis in the pair of arguments that follow the decision to torture the first *logos*, then, so far as Notomi is concerned, the conclusion must be that in those same two passages (237B2-E7 and 238A1-C11), as elsewhere in the dialogue, the Stranger sets out to refute Parmenides.¹⁸⁷

A conclusion which contradicts both the letter and the meaning of the text.¹⁸⁸

¹⁸⁴ Cornford’s earlier remark (quoted above), (1935) 203. Cornford’s later remark, on the Stranger’s reference to a ‘contrary’ of being, (1935) 208. On this latter passage (258E6-9A1), see § LXX below.

¹⁸⁵ See Cornford (1935) 200 n. 3 and 214-15.

¹⁸⁶ Notomi (1999) 177 n. 35

¹⁸⁷ I add that we must be “grateful for small mercies”, because otherwise Notomi’s thesis is presented in a form which, for the careful reader, is not free from ambiguity. See the final footnote in § LII below.

¹⁸⁸ Notomi is in a worse state than Peck. For Notomi, (1999) 173-9, as his criticism of Cornford makes clear, thinks that the pages following the introduction of the first *logos* (237B7-8C11) contain a blanket condemnation of Parmenides, whereas Peck, (1952) 34, does at least appreciate that the Stranger’s first two arguments (237B2-E7 and 238A1-C11) tell in favour of Parmenides. ‘Condemnation’, so Peck believes, (1952), 35-36, stems only from the moment when anyone, including Parmenides, who claims to speak of ‘what is not’ is shown to be enmeshed in self-contradiction (238D1 sqq.). On this point, see § LXII below.—But both Peck and Notomi have in common a neglect of the detail of Parmenides’ poem. Notomi, (1999) 173 n. 23, shies away from any detailed study of the text (see also the final footnote in § xxxv above), while Peck, in order to illustrate what he calls Parmenides’ “dictum”, (1952), constantly quotes snippets of Greek (p. 32: οὐκ ἔστιν εἶναι τὸ μὴ ὄν, p. 35: τὸ μηδαμῶς ὄν οὐκ ἔστι, p. 36: ‘τὸ μὴ ὄν οὐκ ἔστι’ [the quotation marks are given in Peck’s own text]), not one of which is to be found anywhere in the extant fragments nor anywhere in the text of the *Sophist*. For Peck’s neglect of the text of the poem of Parmenides, see also § LVII below.

§ L

How is it then that Notomi has so drastically misunderstood, and therefore misrepresented, Cornford's interpretation? And how is it that an otherwise painstaking scholar has failed to follow the course of the argument at this crucial moment in the dialogue?

Notomi tells us that, in presenting Parmenides' thesis, Plato has reversed the order of Parmenides' original argument. Plato, he tells us, in the pair of arguments that follow immediately the Stranger's first quotation from the poem, has taken as a premiss what had been Parmenides' conclusion, namely "the incompatibility of what is not with what is". Conversely, Plato has taken as a conclusion what Notomi, rather curiously, calls Parmenides' premiss or "presupposition", namely that "what is not is self-evidently unthinkable and unspeakable".¹⁸⁹

Notomi's categorisation of the different strands in Parmenides' argument sits uneasily with the wording of the fragments. When the goddess tells Parmenides (fr. 2.7-8): "What is not, you could not know, nor could you tell it to others", why should we see in her bold statement the expression of a 'presupposition'? Equally, when later in the poem the goddess claims of the second way (fr. 8.16-17): "It has been decided to leave one of the two ways as unthinkable and as nameless", the verb that is used (fr. 8.16: κέκριται) hardly sounds like the statement of a premiss.¹⁹⁰

But even if we were to allow that those words (fr. 2.7-8 and fr. 8.16-17) do constitute Parmenides' 'premiss', and even if we further allow that Parmenides' premiss is re-used as Plato's conclusion in the pair of arguments brought against the first *logos* (237B2-E7 and 238A1-C11), even so, why should the Stranger's re-statement of that premiss, of the claim that 'what is not is unthinkable and unspeakable', be taken as condemnation of Parmenides?

Since Notomi allows that Parmenides himself had said as much (whether by way of premiss or by way of conclusion), why should the repetition of Parmenides' thesis be thought sufficient to condemn it? The point, one might have thought, would be, at most, that Plato disagrees with Parmenides' form of argument, not that he intends (at this stage in the dialogue) to jettison its content.

If, instead, Notomi takes the repetition of Parmenides' thesis as sufficient condemnation of it, the immediate reason seems to be that Notomi has failed

¹⁸⁹ See Notomi (1999) 177. Cf. *Soph.* 237B2-E7 and 238A1-C11.

¹⁹⁰ Does Notomi perhaps use 'premiss' and 'presupposition' synonymously? In that case, we might perhaps allow that fr. 2.7-8 (introduced by a γάρ, "confirmatory and causal, giving the ground for belief..."), cf. Denniston [1966] 58 [s.v. γάρ, § i]) does act as a premiss to the goddess' statement of the second way (see §§ XI-XII above). But it does not follow that the argumentative rôle of the sentence is the same when it is repeated, in a similar but not identical form, in fr. 8.16-17, and introduced by a quite different pair of particles (δ' οὖν, for our passage, see Denniston [1966] 463).

to distinguish the two *logoi*.¹⁹¹ The arguments brought against the first *logos* conclude that “what is not is unthinkable and unspeakable”.¹⁹² That conclusion makes the definition of falsehood and of images, and therefore the definition of the Sophist as maker of falsehood and images, impossible. The Stranger will later prove that that is not so, that images and falsehood do exist, and that the Sophist can be defined accordingly.¹⁹³ Notomi infers that the conclusion of the two earlier arguments must therefore be intended as condemnation of Parmenides...

§ LI

But that is not at all how the Stranger’s argument is in fact presented in the lines immediately following his first quotation from Parmenides. At that critical moment (237B1-3), Notomi fails to distinguish clearly, if at all, what he calls “the statement itself” (237B2: ὁ λόγος αὐτός) which will be subject to ‘torture’ (237B2: βασανισθείς) or to ‘testing’ (Notomi prefers the latter expression) from “the thesis [...] propounded by Parmenides” which he refers to in the same sentence.¹⁹⁴

According to Notomi “the thesis [...] propounded by Parmenides” is the thesis that “it is impossible to think that what is not *is*.”¹⁹⁵ Notomi seemingly fails to appreciate that that thesis cannot possibly be the same as the *logos autos* of 237B2. The expression ὁ λόγος αὐτός at 237B2 obviously picks up from ὁ λόγος οὗτος at 237A3. Both those expressions refer not to Parmenides’ own thesis, but, on the contrary, to the thesis that Parmenides denies, namely the assertion that ‘things that are not, are’ or, in the Stranger’s form of words, the assertion that ‘what is not, is’. The ‘torture’ and attempted refutation of that thesis, and therefore of the thesis to which Parmenides is *opposed*, cannot possibly be intended as *condemnation* of Parmenides.

If Notomi fails to see that point, it can only be because he fails to appreciate that the *logos* initially subject to torture is not Parmenides’ own *logos*, but, on the contrary, the *logos* which Parmenides himself had *condemned*. Parmenides’ own *logos* (cf. “the thesis [...] propounded by Parmenides”) will not be ‘put to the test’ or ‘tortured’ until the Stranger has wrung from

¹⁹¹ The *logos* first subject to torture: 237B1-2. Parmenides’ own *logos*: 241D5-7.

¹⁹² Notomi’s own formulation, (1999) 177, of the conclusion to the two arguments, 237B2-E7 and 238A1-C11.

¹⁹³ See the final pages of the dialogue, 264A8-8D5.

¹⁹⁴ Notomi writes, (1999) 174-5: “The Eleatic visitor says that the thesis has not only been propounded by Parmenides, but will also be proved by testing the statement itself (*ho logos autos*) (237B1-2).” Cf. *Soph.* 237A3-B3.

¹⁹⁵ Notomi, (1999) 173: “The Parmenidean thesis maintains that it is impossible to think that what is not *is*.”

Parmenides' opponent the admission that we cannot think, or speak, of "what is not in any way at all" (237B7-8: τὸ μηδ' αὐτῷς ὄν).¹⁹⁶

§ LII

I conclude that, in criticising Cornford, Notomi quite simply fails to recognise that there has been a radical shift between the two series of arguments (the two sessions of 'torture') that are brought against two different *logoi*.¹⁹⁷

The *logos* subject to torture from 237B2 onwards, the *logos* of Parmenides' adversaries, claims that 'what is not, is' and therefore that we can and do think of 'what is not' (construed as 'what is not in any way at all'). Parmenides' own *logos* (cf. 241D5-7) denies that we can think or speak of 'what is not in any way at all', and therefore denies the claim that 'what is not, is'.

Since the first *logos* is the *logos* of Parmenides' adversaries (our mortal selves), the pair of arguments brought *against* that *logos* will therefore tell *in favour* of Parmenides.¹⁹⁸ Conversely, the second *logos* is the *logos* of Parmenides himself, and the arguments brought *against* that *logos* will therefore be arguments that tell *in favour of* Parmenides' adversaries, and *in favour of* the claim that 'things that are not, are'.¹⁹⁹

Hence what I have called the Stranger's *volte face*.²⁰⁰ After having argued *in favour of* Parmenides' thesis in the pair of arguments that follows the first *logos*, the Stranger will argue *against* that same thesis in the arguments that follow the second *logos*.

That about-turn is crucial to our understanding of the argument. Unless the difference between the two *logoi* and between the two sessions of 'torture' has been grasped, then the Stranger's whole strategy, implying as it does a distinction between "what is not in any way at all" (237B7-8: τὸ

¹⁹⁶ I do hope that I have not done Notomi an injustice in presenting his thesis in this fashion (see also the footnote at the end of the section following this). Reading, and re-reading many times, the sentence quoted in the footnote but one preceding this (Notomi [1999] 174-5: "The Eleatic visitor says that the thesis has not only been propounded by Parmenides, but will also be proved by testing the statement itself"), I ask myself: does Notomi realise that *thesis* and *statement* are here not the same? Does he realise that what he calls Parmenides' 'thesis' is the *denial* of what he calls the 'statement itself'? If he *does* realise that, then how can he possibly take the two arguments which follow (237B2-E7 and 238A1-C11) as condemnation of Parmenides? For what will be 'proved', in the two arguments which follow, is that the statement ('what is not, is') is indeed impossible, and therefore that Parmenides was *right* in his *denial* of that statement. Hence my conclusion that, in the sentence quoted ("The Eleatic visitor says that the thesis has not only been propounded by Parmenides, but will also be proved by testing the statement itself"), Notomi does *not* realise that 'thesis' and 'statement' are different. Notomi (or so I conclude) has failed to distinguish between the *logos* which will be subjected to torture from 237B2 onwards and Parmenides' own *logos* (which will not be subjected to torture until 241D5 sqq.).

¹⁹⁷ The first *logos*: 237B2 sqq. The second *logos*: 241D5 sqq.

¹⁹⁸ *Soph.* 237B2-E7 and 238A1-C11.

¹⁹⁹ *Soph.* 241D5 sqq.

²⁰⁰ Cf. § XXXVII above.

μηδαμῶς ὄν) and “what in a sense is not” (cf. 241D6-7: τό τε μὴ ὄν ὡς ἔστι κατὰ τι), will be lost to sight, and with it the whole tangled tale of the Stranger’s relation to Parmenides.²⁰¹

§ LIII

But, even in saying so much, I am conscious that I have not really reached the source of Notomi’s misunderstanding of the text. In writing of Parmenides’ ‘conclusion’ (“the incompatibility of what is not with what is”) and of his ‘presupposition’ (“what is not is unthinkable and unspeakable”), Notomi has failed to isolate the assumption that lies at the root of ‘presupposition’ and of ‘conclusion’ alike.

Notomi has told us that “the thesis [...] propounded by Parmenides” is the thesis that “it is impossible to think that what is not *is*.”²⁰² That will be true enough, perhaps, as a rough and ready paraphrase of the burden of fr. 7.1-2, namely the goddess’ condemnation of the opinions of mortals.²⁰³ But, as we have seen, in Parmenides’ original poem, the goddess’ condemnation of the ‘third’ way, and therefore of the opinions of mortals, stems from the modal opposition of the two ways expressed earlier in fr. 2, and in particular from her initial statement of the second way as at once “is not” and “it is necessary not to be”.

Plato, I believe, shows that he has seized that point in the very first question-and-answer that follow the decision to ‘torture’ the first *logos*. The Stranger asks Theaetetus: “Tell me: we do, I suppose, dare to utter (237B8: φθέγγεσθαι) what is not in any way at all?”²⁰⁴ Theaetetus replies: “Why on

²⁰¹ If my account of Notomi’s error seems over simple, I can only protest that I have done what I can to make sense of the pages which Notomi entitles, (1999) 173-9: “The difficulty concerning what is not.” It is true that there remain ambiguities which I have been unable to fathom. For example, in his comment on the passage where the Stranger asks “one of the company” what the name “what is not” can be applied to (237B10-C4, cf. § xiv above), Notomi quotes, (1999) 178 n. 37, apparently with approval, Campbell’s remark, (1867) 83, that “Parmenides is conceived as thus questioning one of his hearers in defence of his thesis”. But why should the Stranger take upon himself, at this point, the *persona* of Parmenides, and why should he then seek to speak in ‘defence’ of Parmenides’ thesis if, as Notomi believes, his immediate aim, in the argument which follows (237C5-E7), is to condemn that thesis?—I am not at all sure that Notomi has stopped to ask himself this question. If he has, he gives his reader no means of knowing what his answer would have been.

²⁰² Notomi, (1999) 173: “The Parmenidean thesis maintains that it is impossible to think that what is not *is*.” Cf. 174: “the thesis [...] propounded by Parmenides”.

²⁰³ When Guthrie has failed to distinguish the second way of fr. 2 from the ‘third’ way of fr. 7.1-2 (see §§ xxiv-xxvi above), it would no doubt be asking too much for Notomi to do better. For Notomi’s failure to distinguish singular and plural in his paraphrase of fr. 7.1-2, see the final footnote in § xxxv above.

²⁰⁴ *Soph.* 237B7-8: καί μοι λέγε· τὸ μηδαμῶς ὄν τολμῶμέν που φθέγγεσθαι; For the particle (που), Denniston, (1966) 491, writes of an “assumed diffidence”, of a “tone of uncertainty, whether real or assumed”, which exactly matches our context. The Stranger knows full well that he is leading Theaetetus up the garden path, and that the careless innocence of his question is in fact fraught with danger. See also the final footnote in § LXIII below.

earth not?"²⁰⁵ The Stranger's "what is not in any way at all" answers, I would suggest, to the goddess' statement of the second way (fr. 2.5) as "it is necessary not to be". For if I dare transpose the goddess' modal statement from the verb (fr. 2.5: μή εἶναι) to the substantivised use of the participle which follows (fr. 2.7: τό [...] μὴ ἑόν), then the non-being of the second way becomes 'what is necessarily not', and that, I would suggest, is within whispering distance of what the Stranger calls "what is not in any way at all".

If that is so, then the Stranger—Plato—has rightly seen that the reason for Parmenides' condemnation of the beliefs of mortals lies not only in the obvious contradiction ('things that are not/are'), but more fundamentally still, in the nature of the non-being that is implied by the negation of the participle: 'things that are not' (fr. 7.1: μὴ ἑόντα). Mortals are wrong, not only in claiming that 'things that are not, are', but, more fundamentally still, in claiming to speak of what the goddess had already told them, in her opening statement of the two ways (fr. 2.7-8): "you could not know, nor could you tell it to others". For what we cannot 'know' and what we cannot 'tell to others' is 'what is not' understood as 'what is necessarily not', and therefore (so I would suggest) as 'what is not in any way at all'.

§ LIV

That assumption ('what is not' taken as synonymous with 'what is not in any way at all') controls and explains the nature of the two arguments brought against the first *logos*.²⁰⁶ The 'torture' inflicted on the first *logos*, the claim that 'things that are not, are' or that 'what is not, is', will turn precisely on the two points, whether in attempting to utter the words 'what is not' we are able to 'speak' at all, or whether we are even able to utter the words that we would be speaking of were we able to 'speak', given the initial admission that 'what is not' is, in both cases, to be understood as 'what is not in any way at all'.²⁰⁷

Subject to that assumption, which is Parmenides' own assumption as implied by his initial statement of the second way, the first *logos*, the opinions of mortals, will indeed be forced to confess that 'what is not' cannot prop-

²⁰⁵ *Soph.* 237B9: πῶς γὰρ οὐ; Theaetetus replies with an elliptical answer in the form of a question, the *negative* question implying assent to a *positive* statement or to a *positive* question. The answer is elliptical, because assent is implied by the explanation given of it: the explanatory γὰρ implies an antecedent 'yes'. This use of πῶς γὰρ οὐ; is not uncommon. See Denniston (1966) 73 (s.v. γάρ, § v [1]), 76-7 (*ibid.*, § v [6], [i]) and esp. 86 (*ibid.*, § vii). I translate πῶς; (literally *how?*) as *why?*, only for the sake of the English idiom: πῶς γὰρ οὐ; "Why on earth not?" For those who prefer a more strait-laced translation, see L. S. J., s.v. πῶς, § iii 1: πῶς γὰρ οὐ; "How can it but be? i.e. it must be so."

²⁰⁶ *Soph.* 237B2-E7 and 238A1-C11.

²⁰⁷ I shall enter into the details of the two arguments in the sections following this: see §§ LV-LVII below for the first argument (237B2-E7), and §§ LVIII-LX below for the second argument (238A1-C11).

erly be ‘spoken’ of, and indeed cannot even be ‘uttered’. Hence the Stranger’s support for Parmenides, at this moment in the dialogue.²⁰⁸ So long as ‘what is not’ is construed as ‘what is not in any way at all’, Parmenides’ condemnation of the first *logos* will indeed be upheld.

But of course that is not the whole story. Parmenides’ thesis, and the Stranger’s initial confirmation of Parmenides’ thesis, is seen, temporarily, as blocking the way to any attempt at defining falsehood or images. For that obstacle to be removed, the assumption that ‘what is not’ is invariably synonymous with ‘what is not in any way at all’ will have to be abandoned, as it is when Parmenides’ own *logos* is subject to torture.

At the beginning of that second session of torture (241D5 sqq.), ‘what is not’ will therefore no longer be construed as ‘what is not in any way at all’. Instead, the Stranger will explicitly set out to prove, against Parmenides, that “there is a sense in which what is not, is” (cf. 241D6-7: τό τε μὴ ὄν ὥς ἔστι κατά τι) and that “contrariwise, what is, in a way, is not” (cf. 241D7: καὶ τὸ ὄν αὖ πάλιν ὥς οὐκ ἔστι πῆ). But until that moment, ‘what is not’ is consistently taken as ‘what is not in any way at all’. And ‘what is not in any way at all’, the Stranger and Parmenides agree, cannot be spoken or thought of.

But I risk anticipating the conclusion to the Stranger’s criticism of Parmenides. For the moment, let us return to the Stranger’s first quotation from the poem, and look in on the grisly details of the torture inflicted on the first *logos*. As we do so, it will become clear, at every turn, that the torture of the first *logos* yields arguments *against* the claim that ‘what is not, is’ (or that ‘things that are not, are’), and therefore *in favour of* Parmenides’ denial of that claim.²⁰⁹

²⁰⁸ I am still speaking only of the two arguments that follow the decision to torture the first *logos*: *Soph.* 237B2-E7 and 238A1-C11.

²⁰⁹ I am here—purely for the sake of clarity—simplifying the transition from the first session of torture (237B2 sqq.) to the second (241D5 sqq.). Between those two moments, there will be a twilight zone (the attempted definitions of images: 239C9-40C6, and of falsehood: 240C7-1B3), where ‘what is not’ construed as ‘what is not in any way at all’ has to consort unhappily with various qualified expressions both of being and of non-being (an image is ‘not really being’, οὐκ ὄντως ὄν, 240B7; a statement that is false says of ‘things that are not’ that ‘in a way they are’, εἶναί πως, 240E3). It is to escape from this confusion that the Stranger will be ‘constrained’ (cf. 241D5: ἀναγκάϊον) to torture Parmenides’ own *logos*. But the confusion does not reach back into the pair of arguments initially brought against the first *logos* (237B2-E7 and 238A1-C11), where the assumption is consistently that ‘what is not’ is tantamount to ‘what is not in any way at all’. So long as that assumption holds the floor, repudiation of the first *logos* can hardly fail.

Part six

§ LV

We have already witnessed the opening argument of the first session of torture. Someone who attempts to utter the words 'what is not', cannot properly be said to be speaking of nothing; the truth is that he is not even 'speaking' at all.²¹⁰

That, of course, had been substantially Parmenides' point. "What is not," the goddess had told Parmenides, when she had first spoken of the second way (fr. 2.7-8), "you could not know, nor could you tell it to others." That same way, she tells him later in the poem (fr. 8.17), is "unthinkable" and "nameless". 'Is not' (fr. 8.8-9) "cannot be said, nor thought."²¹¹

Fairly obviously therefore, the Stranger is here repeating, with only an extra twist, the claim that Parmenides' goddess herself had made. The goddess had said, of what is not, that "you could not tell it to others" (fr. 2.8: οὔτε φράσαις), and that it "cannot be said", that it is "unsayable" (fr. 8.8: οὐ [...] φατόν). Plato's Stranger merely adds the point that, if you try to utter the words 'what is not' or 'nothing' (trying to mean by that 'what is not in any way at all'), then you end up not even 'speaking' at all (*Soph.* 237E5-6: οὐδὲ λέγειν φατέον).²¹²

That extra twist to the argument can hardly be intended as 'condemnation' of Parmenides. On the contrary, the Stranger is here presenting Parmenides' own argument in an even more extreme form, in order to confute the claim, made by Parmenides' adversaries (again, our mortal selves), that we do speak of what is not, and indeed that we say of 'things that are not' that they 'are' (when we speak of things that come into being and pass away).²¹³

§ LVI

That conclusion—that perspective—is confirmed if we pay attention to the question of names.

Early on in his interrogation of the first *logos*, the Stranger asks Theaetetus, in a passage I have already had occasion to quote:

²¹⁰ *Soph.* 237B2-E7, esp. 237E1-7. See §§ XVIII-XXI above.

²¹¹ For the translation of these fragments (repeated here with a slight variation), see O'Brien, (1987) 17, 35 and 36.

²¹² "What is not in any way at all." As I have already noted (§§ LIII and LIV above), the whole argument (*Soph.* 237B2-E7) is governed by the Stranger's use of this expression at the beginning of the first session of torture (237B7-8: τὸ μηδαμῶς ὄν).

²¹³ For this interpretation of the opinions of mortals, and of the claim that 'things that are not, are', see O'Brien, (1987) 231-4.

Suppose one of this company were seriously required to concentrate his mind and tell us to what this name can be applied—‘that which is not’. Of what thing or of what sort of thing should we expect him to use it himself, and what would he indicate by it to the enquirer?²¹⁴

The answer of course will be that there is no answer.²¹⁵ ‘Non-being’ or ‘that which is not’ may look like a name, but it isn’t the name of anything. There isn’t anything to which the name ‘non-being’ can be ‘applied’, there is nothing which it can be ‘fitted onto’ (cf. 237C2: ἐπιφέρειν).

How different is that from the point made explicitly by Parmenides, when his goddess declares that the second way is “nameless” (fr. 8.17: ἀνόνημον)? The Stranger says that non-being is not the name of anything. Parmenides’ says that non-being is nameless. How can we possibly be intended to take the first point as controverting the second?

The Stranger invites us to think of non-being as a name, and then to find something which the name will ‘apply’ to.²¹⁶ Our search is doomed to failure.²¹⁷ Parmenides’ goddess invites us, so to speak, to find a name that we can apply to non-being, a name that would allow us to ‘point out’ non-being to someone else. Again, the attempt is fruitless. Non-being has no name.²¹⁸ Neither one argument could possibly be taken as ‘condemnation’ of the other. Both arguments are making essentially the same point.²¹⁹

The conclusion is surely obvious. The argument that the Stranger employs (non-being is not the name of anything) is a mere variant on an argument that Parmenides himself had put in the mouth of his goddess (non-being has no name). Both arguments are opposed to the thesis which would

²¹⁴ Plato, *Soph.* 237B10-C4, as translated by Cornford, (1935) 204. For my earlier use of the passage, see § xiv above (criticism of Miss Anscombe).

²¹⁵ Cf. *Soph.* 239B7-C8.

²¹⁶ *Soph.* 237B10-C4.

²¹⁷ Cf. *Soph.* 239B7-C8.

²¹⁸ Cf. fr. 8.17 and fr. 2.7-8. See also the footnote following this.

²¹⁹ In presenting Parmenides’ version of the argument, I rely on the parallelism between (a) the two terms used in fr. 8.17: the second way is “unthinkable” (ἀνόητον) and “nameless” (ἀνόνημον), and (b) the two verbs used in fr. 2.7-8: “what is not, you could not know (οὔτε [...] γνοίης), nor could you point it out to others (οὔτε φράσαις).” My suggestion is that you cannot “know” the second way (fr. 2.7: οὔτε [...] γνοίης) because it is “unthinkable” (fr. 8.17: ἀνόητον), and that you cannot “point it out to others” (fr. 2.8: οὔτε φράσαις) because it is “nameless” (fr. 8.17: ἀνόνημον). My introductory “so to speak” is intended as a warning that this conjunction of the two fragments, plus, of course, the whole notion of the goddess’ ‘invitation’, is hypothetical. (I indulge in such hypotheses only very rarely and, whenever I do so, I always warn the reader.) If my hypothesis is correct, then the point will be that, when the goddess says of the second way οὔτε φράσαις (fr. 2.8), the reason for our not being able to ‘point it out’ to others is that it doesn’t lead anywhere, and therefore that it doesn’t have a name. It could equally well be suggested that the reason why we can’t ‘point out’ the second way to anyone else is simply that it isn’t there to be pointed out—there isn’t anything there to point to. But of course the two suggestions are not mutually exclusive. Indeed, in the context of the poem, they are not essentially different.

claim that 'things that are not, are' or that 'what is not, is'.²²⁰ If 'what is not' has no name (Parmenides), if 'what is not' is not the name of anything (Plato's Stranger), then obviously we cannot be expected to say of 'what is not' that 'it is'.²²¹

If Plato is here providing a variant on an argument already used by Parmenides, it is precisely because, at this point in the dialogue (237B2-E7), his purpose is not to portray the Stranger as voicing an argument *against* Parmenides. Quite the contrary. The Stranger is here giving voice to an argument *in favour of* Parmenides, and *against* the thesis that Parmenides had condemned.

§ LVII

In the light of that conclusion, what are we to make of the statement to be found on the opening page of Peck's article:

It is not unreasonable to hold that the 'thing' corresponding to the name τὸ μὴ ὄν is just nothing. Doubtless the term [*sc.* τὸ μὴ ὄν as the name of nothing] was used quite seriously and genuinely by Parmenides in this sense.²²²

I can only suppose that Peck writes as he does because he has taken the Stranger's question in the *Sophist*, "What should the name non-being be applied to?" (*cf.* 237C1-2: ποῖ χρὴ τοῦτον ἐπιφέρειν τοῦτο, τὸ μὴ ὄν;) as addressed directly to Parmenides, and that Peck has taken it upon himself to answer, on behalf of Parmenides, that τὸ μὴ ὄν is a name which applies to 'nothing'.

Both of Peck's assumptions are false. The Stranger's question: "What should the name non-being be applied to?" (*cf.* *Soph.* 237C1-2), is not a question addressed to Parmenides. It is question addressed to Parmenides' adversaries (our mortal selves). If that question had been addressed to Parmenides, his answer would not have been, as Peck imagines, that 'what is not' is the name of 'nothing'. For 'what is not' and 'nothing' are used interchangeably in the poem.²²³ And of the way which declares *is not* the goddess states specifically that it *has no name* (fr. 8.17: ἄνῳνον).

²²⁰ Fr. 7.1-2 ("things that are not, are"). *Soph.* 237A3-4 ("what is not, is"). For the difference between singular and plural, see the final footnote of § xxxv above.

²²¹ I simplify slightly the conclusion that the Stranger draws from the (fruitless) search for something that 'what is not' could be the name of. The Stranger in fact continues (237C2-4, in Cornford's translation, as quoted above): "Of what thing or of what sort of thing should we expect him to use it himself, and what would he indicate by it to the enquirer?" I have already suggested that the Stranger's disjunction here between 'using something oneself' and 'indicating to an enquirer', as also the similar disjunction, on the following page (238B6-8), between *thinking* and *speaking*, echoes Parmenides' own disjunction between 'knowing' (*cf.* γνῶις) and 'telling, *sc.* to someone else' (*cf.* φράσας) in fr. 2.7-8. See the footnotes to § xiv above.

²²² Peck (1952) 32.

²²³ See fr. 8.7 and 10, where the two expressions μὴ ἔόντος (fr. 8.7) and τοῦ μηδενός (fr. 8.10) are used in parallel arguments to prove the impossibility of any growth or birth from 'what is not'.

Indeed it is hard to see how Peck could possibly have written as he does except as the result of a *lapsus linguae*, or perhaps more simply of a *lapsus memoriae*. For how could Peck possibly have written that non-being “was used quite seriously and genuinely by Parmenides” as a *name* for nothing, unless he had quite simply forgotten the words of the goddess? The goddess has told us explicitly that the second way, ‘is not’, is *nameless* (see again fr. 8.17: ἀνόνημον).²²⁴

§ LVIII

The Sophist’s first argument has told *in favour of* Parmenides, and *against* his adversaries.²²⁵ That same point will be no less obvious if we turn to the second argument in the Stranger’s arsenal.²²⁶

So far the Stranger has concluded that anyone who tries to utter ‘what is not’ ends up, not only speaking of nothing, but not even ‘speaking’ at all.²²⁷ The Stranger now takes a critical look at the one verb that the would-be speaker had still, so far, been left with: he may ‘try to utter what is not’ (cf. 237E6: ὅς γ’ ἂν ἐπιχειρῇ μὴ ὄν φθέγγεσθαι), but does he succeed?

Whether we speak of ‘what is not’ in the singular, or of ‘things that are not’ in the plural, in either case we attach number to what is not; and number, as Theaetetus, the budding mathematician, only too readily agrees, has as much, if not more claim than anything else to be counted as ‘what is’ (238B1: εἴπερ γε καὶ ἄλλο τι θετέον ὥς ὄν).²²⁸

‘What is not in any way at all’ cannot therefore properly be spoken of either as a singular or as a plural. But if we cannot speak of ‘what is not’ either as singular or as plural, then ‘what is not’, still taken to mean ‘what is not in any way at all’, ends up as quite literally “unutterable” (238C10: ἀφθεγκτον).²²⁹

The negative verbal adjective, “unutterable” (238C10: ἀφθεγκτον), is intended to remind us of the argument immediately preceding, the argument which claims that, if anyone tries to “utter” (237E6: φθέγγεσθαι) what is not, he ends up not even ‘speaking’ at all.²³⁰ What the second argument tells

²²⁴ Nor therefore would I have resurrected Peck’s error from nearly half a century of neglect and paraded it before the readers of this *Festschrift*, were it not that Peck’s authority has been invoked by Notomi to cloak his own, more recent error.

²²⁵ *Soph.* 237B2-E7, esp. 237E1-7. See §§ XVIII-XXI above and the sections immediately preceding this one (§§ LV-LVII).

²²⁶ *Soph.* 238A1-C11.

²²⁷ *Soph.* 237B2-E7, esp. 237E1-7.

²²⁸ For Theaetetus’ prowess as a budding mathematician, see the opening pages of the *Theaetetus* (esp. 143E4-4B7 and 145D1-3).

²²⁹ As before (see §§ LIII-LIV above; cf. § LV above), the whole argument is determined by the attempt to speak of ‘what is not’ defined as ‘what is not in any way at all’ (237B7-8: τὸ μὴ ὄν ὡς ὄν).

²³⁰ *Soph.* 237B2-E7, esp. 237E1-7. See §§ XVIII-XXI and §§ LV-LVII above.

us is that, though someone may try to utter what is not (cf. 237E6: ἐπιχειρῆ), he fails.

Not only is the one argument intended to remind us of the other; the two arguments can easily be seen as cumulative. In trying to utter what is not, not only does our unfortunate friend fail to 'speak'; he fails even to 'utter' what is it that he would have been speaking about if he had been able to 'speak'.²³¹

What had claimed to be part of a *logos* (cf. λόγος, 237A3 and B2) ends up having no part in *logos* at all (cf. ἄλογον, 238C10).

§ LIX

But that is not the only purpose of the Stranger's second argument. Even more significantly, the conclusion that 'what is not' is 'unutterable' looks back to the Stranger's very first question to Theaetetus, at the opening of the first session of torture. The Stranger's first question to Theaetetus had been (237B7-8): "Tell me: we do, I suppose, dare to utter (237B8: φθέγγεσθαι) what is not in any way at all?" And Theaetetus had replied (237B9): "Why on earth not?"²³² Scarcely two pages later, Theaetetus' rash *naïveté* has taken a tumble. What he had dared to *utter* (237B8: φθέγγεσθαι) has proved *unutterable* (238C10: ἄφθεγκτον).

But who precisely has been led into contradiction, in being forced to admit that what he had thought to *utter* is in fact *unutterable*? Theaetetus, of course. But not only, nor even primarily, Theaetetus. When the Stranger asks Theaetetus: "Tell me: we do, I suppose, dare to utter what is not in any way at all?", his use of the verb *dare* (237B8: τολμῶμεν) looks back to the use of that same verb only a couple of lines earlier, where the Stranger introduces the first *logos* as a *logos* which "has *dared* (237A3: τετόλμηκεν) to lay down that what is not, is". When the Stranger repeats that verb in his question to Theaetetus (τετόλμηκεν, 237A3: τολμῶμεν, 237B8), the implication is that Theaetetus is being made to act as spokesman of the first *logos*, as spokesman of the *logos* that Parmenides had condemned.

It is true that the Stranger's question, and therefore by implication Theaetetus' answer, is cast in terms of a generous *we*. The Stranger asks Theaetetus (237B7-8): "We do, I suppose, dare to utter what is not?" But that of course is all just as it should be. For the claim which Parmenides attacks, the claim that 'things that are not, are', is, in the context of the poem, a statement of the belief of mortals,²³³ of all of us therefore who believe, as most of us do, that things come into being and pass away, out of 'nothing' and into 'nothing', and who would be perfectly willing therefore

²³¹ The two arguments: 237B2-E7 (237E6: φθέγγεσθαι) and 238A1-C11 (238C10: ἄφθεγκτον).

²³² For the syntax of question and answer, see the footnotes to § LIII above.

²³³ Cf. § XXIV above.

to answer the Stranger's question, or any similar question, with the same unthinking assurance that Theaetetus has shown. "Speak of nothing at all?" "Yes, of course we can. Why ever not?"

The *we* of the Stranger's question, and by implication of Theaetetus' reply, sits perfectly happily therefore with the repetition of the Stranger's 'dare' (237B8: τολμῶμεν). The *we* who *dare* to utter 'what is not in any way at all' repeat the *logos* which *dared* to lay down that 'what is not, is' (237A3: τετόλμηκεν). *We* are therefore the hapless mortals of Parmenides' poem, whose beliefs the goddess has summarised in the verses that the Stranger has quoted (fr. 7.1-2: 'things that are not, are'). At the same time, *we* are the average Athenian citizen of Plato's own day, including, at this moment in the dialogue, the youthful Theaetetus.²³⁴

§ LX

Theaetetus' rôle as spokesman for the first *logos* explains the significance of the question (237B7-8) and answer (237B9) which open the first session of torture (237B2 sqq.).²³⁵ For Theaetetus is being asked, in effect, at this moment in the dialogue (237B7-9), to agree to a re-statement of the first *logos* in a form which will be adapted to the 'mild torture' that is to follow (cf. 237B2: μέτρια βασανισθεῖς).

In the Stranger's question, and therefore, by implication, in Theaetetus' answer, 'what is not' (cf. 237A3: τὸ μὴ ὄν) is repeated as 'what is not in any way at all' (237B7-8: τὸ μηδαμῶς ὄν), and the first question that Parmenides' adversaries have to answer becomes, not whether we can say of 'things that are not', that they 'are' (or of 'what is not', that it 'is'), but the more radical question (cf. 237B7-8): do we dare *utter* (237B8: φθέγγεσθαι) what is not in any way at all?

The answer, less than two pages later (238A1-C11), that no, that 'what is not in any way at all' or 'what just simply is not' is *unutterable* (238C10: ἀφθεγκτον), is therefore plainly intended, in the context of the dialogue, as a refutation of the first *logos*, in the form in which the Stranger and Theaetetus had agreed to re-state that *logos* at the beginning of the first session of torture. The first *logos* had 'dared' to lay down that 'what is not, is' (237A3-4) and, in doing so, had 'dared' to utter 'what is not in any way at all' (cf. 237B7-8). But that is just not possible: 'what is not in any way at all', 'what just simply is not', proves to be unutterable (238A1-C11).²³⁶

²³⁴ For further remarks on the Stranger's use of the word *dare*, see § LXXI below.

²³⁵ The Stranger, 237B7-8: "Tell me: we do, I suppose, dare to utter what is not in any way at all?" Theaetetus, 237B9: "Why on earth not?" Cf. § LIII above.

²³⁶ At this moment in the dialogue, the two expressions "what is not in any way at all" (237B7-8: τὸ μηδαμῶς ὄν) and "what just simply is not" (238C9: τὸ μὴ ὄν αὐτὸ καθ' αὐτό) are meant to be synonymous. When the Stranger concludes that "what just simply is not" is "unutterable" (238C8-10), his conclusion is intended to controvert the opening statement, 237B7-8: we dare to utter "what is not in any way at all". See also the footnote at the end of this section.

I conclude that the Stranger's second argument (what is not is 'unutterable') is not intended, any more than his first argument had been, as condemnation of Parmenides.²³⁷ Parmenides had already stigmatised what is not as "nameless" (fr. 8.17: ἀνόνημον) and as what "cannot be said" (fr. 8.8-9: οὐ [...] φατόν), and the Stranger's conclusion that what is not is 'unutterable' is not intended to undo that thesis. Indeed how could the claim that what is not is *unutterable* (238C10: ἀφθεγκτον) be intended to refute the claim that what is not is *unsayable* (cf. fr. 8.8-9: οὐ [...] φατόν)?

Quite the contrary. The Stranger is, here again, as at the end of his first argument, putting forward an even more radical form of Parmenides' own thesis in support of Parmenides' condemnation of the first *logos*.²³⁸

Part seven

§ LXI

But now the plot thickens. So far, Plato has presented the Stranger as bringing two successive arguments against the first *logos*: anyone who tries to utter 'what is not' not only does not 'speak'; he is not even able to utter 'what is not', since 'what is not in any way at all', 'what just simply is not', is unutterable.²³⁹ At this moment there is an unexpected addition to the *dramatis personae*. By a pretty conceit, the non-being which has just been declared 'unutterable' itself intervenes in the debate, in order to reduce its persecutor to a state of bewilderment.²⁴⁰

If what is not is unutterable (so the puzzle runs), then the very person who attempts to challenge (238D5: τὸν ἐλέγχοντα) the possibility of uttering 'what is not' ends up contradicting himself. For at the very moment when he claims that 'what is not' is *unutterable*, he has himself *uttered* the

²³⁷ The first argument: *Soph.* 237B2-E7. See §§ LV-LVII above. The second argument: *Soph.* 238A1-C11. See the sections immediately preceding this (§§ LVIII-LIX).

²³⁸ I have noted (in the footnote but one preceding this) that, for the purpose of the Stranger's immediate argument, the two expressions "what is not in any way at all" (237B7-8: τὸ μηδ' ὅπως οὐκ) and "what just simply is not" (238C9: τὸ μὴ ὅν αὐτὸ καθ' αὐτό) are treated as synonymous. But, by one of those innumerable deft touches which Plato so often adds to his dialogues, the expression τὸ μὴ ὅν αὐτὸ καθ' αὐτό (238C9) is also reminiscent of the style of expression regularly used to describe a Platonic form, and therefore looks forward to the description of the form of non-being given much later in the dialogue (258A11-E5), with the crucial difference, however, that the Stranger's form of non-being will *not* be synonymous with "what is not in any way at all", in so far the Stranger's form of non-being will be a 'form which is, of what is not' (cf. 258D6-7).—It would be a happy task to point out more of the little subtleties that Plato has in store for the attentive reader, but alas the time is not yet ripe for so delicate a style of commentary. Such niceties must be left for the golden day when the strategy and purpose of Plato's dialogues have been better understood than they are by current commentators.

²³⁹ The two arguments: *Soph.* 237B2-E7 and 238A1-C11.

²⁴⁰ Non-being intervenes: *Soph.* 238D4-7 (quoted, in part, shortly below).

words. And therefore, in the very statement of his refutation, he has contradicted himself, by being forced to *utter* what he had himself set out to prove was *unutterable*.²⁴¹

In this passage, non-being is introduced as author of the action (238D4-7: τὸν ἐλέγχοντα εἰς ἀπορίαν καθίστησι τὸ μὴ ὄν), because the person he is acting upon, ‘the challenger’ (238D5: τὸν ἐλέγχοντα), is none other than the Stranger, in his (temporary) rôle as defender of Parmenides. Rather than have the awkwardness of the Stranger reducing himself to puzzlement, Plato makes a pretty point of having non-being itself turn on its tormentor and reduce him to bewilderment, by convicting him of contradiction.

The contradiction is of course inevitable. The Stranger, as also Parmenides himself, cannot refer to non-being except as a singular (τὸ μὴ ὄν, “what is not”; μηδέν, “nothing”) or a plural (μὴ ἑόντα, “things that are not”).²⁴² If both expressions are proscribed, as adding number, and so ‘what is’, to ‘what is not’, then there is no expression which will adequately designate ‘what is not in any way at all’.²⁴³

§ LXII

But does this inevitable paradox entitle us to conclude that, at this moment in the dialogue (238D1-9C8), Parmenides has been ‘condemned’?

Parmenides had never claimed that we could speak or think of ‘what is not’. Quite the reverse. He had stated explicitly, of what is not, that “you could not know, nor could you tell it to others” (fr. 2.7-8), that it is “un-thinkable” and “nameless” (fr. 8.17), that it “cannot be said, nor thought” (fr. 8.8-9).

Admittedly, in claiming that what is not is unsayable (fr. 8.8-9: οὐ [...] φατόν [...] ἔστιν), Parmenides has ‘said’ precisely what he tells us cannot be ‘said’ (fr. 8.9: ὅπως οὐκ ἔστι).

This is the difficulty any philosopher is in, in rejecting, by reasoning, an essentially incoherent thought. He has to formulate it somehow in order to show it up as incoherent.²⁴⁴

²⁴¹ *Soph.* 238D1-9C8.

²⁴² “What is not” (τὸ μὴ ὄν): see, for example, *Soph.* 238D4-7; cf. Parmenides, fr. 2.7. “Nothing” (μηδέν): see, for example, *Soph.* 237E5; cf. Parmenides, fr. 8.10. “Things that are not” (μὴ ἑόντα): see, for example, Parmenides, fr. 7.1; cf. *Soph.* 241A1.

²⁴³ Cf. *Soph.* 238A1-C11; § LVIII above.

²⁴⁴ Anscombe (1969) 126 (Anscombe [1981] 3 has tried to tidy up her style by writing *rejecting*, instead of *in rejecting*). I am glad, for once, to be able to quote Miss Anscombe with approval, even if on so obvious a point. A neat example of the difficulty, should one be needed, is provided by Strawson’s criticism of the theory which would deny that ‘my’ feelings can properly be said to belong to an Ego. That theory, he writes, “is not coherent, in that one who holds it is forced to make use of that sense of possession of which he denies the existence, in presenting his case for the denial”. See Strawson (1959) 96.

But can this inevitable paradox of self-contradiction be claimed as 'condemnation' of Parmenides? Hardly so. For the first *logos* has not been reinstated by the Stranger's argument at this point. The paradox that, in declaring 'what is not' to be *unutterable*, we nonetheless *utter* the expression, does not lead to the conclusion that 'what is not' can, after all, be uttered.

And is it not until the first *logos* has been reinstated (as it will be, many pages later in the dialogue) that we can even think to claim that Parmenides has been 'condemned'?²⁴⁵

§ LXIII

Even at this moment in the dialogue (238D1-9C8), the position that has been created is therefore not at all the simple 'condemnation' of Parmenides that both Peck and Notomi wish to insist upon.²⁴⁶

The first *logos*, re-formulated as the claim that we dare give utterance to 'what is not in any way at all', has been forced, under torture, to concede two points: first, that if anyone attempts to utter what is not, he is speaking of nothing, and therefore not really 'speaking' at all; and secondly, that the very attempt to *utter* what is not ends in failure, since what is not proves to be *unutterable*. Both points reinforce Parmenides' condemnation of the first *logos*.²⁴⁷

At this moment non-being itself intervenes (238D5), and points out that that last argument bends in the hand of anyone who seeks to use it, since the challenger (*cf.* 238D5: τὸν ἐλέγχοντα) who attempts to prove that non-being is unutterable, in the very act of *uttering* what he claims is *unutterable*, is himself tainted by the crime that he seeks to condemn.

That *riposte* does not at all mean that the first *logos*, and the claim that we can think and speak of what is not, has been reinstated. Nor therefore has Parmenides been shown to be wrong. The position, at this moment in the dialogue (238D1-9C8), is more of a stalemate. The Stranger who had argued, in Parmenides' favour, that what is not is unutterable, has been hoist with his own petard: if non-being is unutterable, then it is so, for the victim and for his persecutor alike.²⁴⁸

²⁴⁵ For the reinstatement of the first *logos* (the claim that 'things that are not, are'), see *Soph.* 258D1-E5. *Cf.* §§ LXVIII-LXXII below.

²⁴⁶ Peck, (1952) 32-6, and Notomi, (1999) 173-9, both see in the paradox of self-contradiction a 'condemnation' of Parmenides. See §§ XLVIII and XLIX above.

²⁴⁷ The first point: 237B2-E7. The second point: 238A1-C11.

²⁴⁸ This was, of course, the conclusion that the Stranger foresaw when, immediately before his quotation from Parmenides, he had warned Theaetetus (236E3-7A1) that, in "uttering" the assertion or the belief that "things that are false really are" (236E4-5: τοῦτο φθεγξάμενον, where τοῦτο looks back to ψευδῇ λέγειν ἢ δοξάζειν ὄντως εἶναι), they risked being "caught up in contradiction" (236E5: ἐναντιολογία [...] συνέχεσθαι). Hence my earlier remark (the third footnote to § LIII above) about the Stranger deliberately leading Theaetetus up the garden path. In encouraging Theaetetus to agree that "we do dare utter what is not in any way at all" (237B7-9), the Stranger knows full well that they are attempting to *utter* the *unutterable*.

§ LXIV

The immediate consequence of that *impasse* is that the Sophist remains entrenched (cf. 239C6: καταδέδυνκεν) in the “place of puzzlement” (239C6-7: εἰς ἄπορον τόπον) whither he had fled when the question of non-being and falsehood first raised its head.²⁴⁹

From his familiar place of hiding, the Sophist can once again taunt the Stranger and Theaetetus with their inability to characterise him either as a maker of images or as a maker of falsehoods. For Theaetetus and the Stranger agree that a likeness, “though *not being* really, *is* really what we call a likeness”.²⁵⁰ Similarly, they agree that a statement that is false says of things that *are*, that they *are not*, and of things that *are not*, that they *are*.²⁵¹ Both definitions inevitably include ‘what is not’. But ‘what is not’ (construed as ‘what is not in any way at all’) has been shown to be unutterable. The Sophist cannot therefore be described as either a maker of images or a maker of falsehood.²⁵²

The very fact that, in this passage (239C9-41B3), preceding as it does the second session of torture (241D5 sqq.), the Sophist has not yet been pinned down proves that Parmenides has not yet been defeated. The Sophist will not “admit” (241A3: οὐ φήσκει) that, as required by the definition of falsehood (240E10-1A1), ‘things that are, *are not*’, or that ‘things that *are not*, are’. His refusal shows that Parmenides’ denial of the first *logos* still holds sway. For if the Sophist is still able to refuse those two sentences (241A1: ‘things that are, *are not*’, ‘things that *are not*, are’), it is only because Parmenides has not yet been defeated and because it has not yet been proved therefore that we can and do think and speak of what is not.

(238A1-C11) and that they will therefore end up being entangled in self-contradiction (238D1-9C8).

²⁴⁹ The “place of puzzlement”: εἰς ἄπορον [...] τόπον, 239C6-7, echoes 236D1-2: εἰς ἄπορον εἶδος.

²⁵⁰ The Stranger asks, 240B12-13: οὐκ ὃν ἄρα ὄντως ἐστὶν ὄντως ἦν λέγομεν εἰκόνα; For the text and translation of this passage, see the footnote at the end of this paragraph.

²⁵¹ The Stranger declares, 240E10-1A1: λόγος [...] ψευδής [...] νομισθήσεται τὰ τε ὄντα λέγων μὴ εἶναι καὶ τὰ μὴ ὄντα εἶναι.

²⁵² Images: 239C9-40C6. Falsehood: 240C7-1B3. The statement of falsehood, at least from the point of view of text and translation, is straightforward enough. Not so the account of images. Opinions on the meaning and the transmission of the whole passage (239C9-40C6), and especially of the Stranger’s final ‘definition’ of an image (240B12-13), differ widely. The text I have translated is the text as corrected by Badham, (1865) XXXIII, and as printed by Burnet, (1905) *ad loc.* Burnet did later change his mind, (1920) 137; see also Burnet, (1914) 236. But the text of his edition is retained by Duke and others, (1995) *ad loc.* (p. 423), although with a change of punctuation and a change of accent. The text that I have quoted from Burnet, with the translation that I have given of it, is the only one that seems to me compatible both with the flow of the argument and with Plato’s use of Greek. But I shall hope to explore the whole question in a future publication.

§ LXV

But Parmenides' position is no longer as impregnable as it had seemed to be at the end of the first pair of arguments.²⁵³ The *logos* of Parmenides' adversaries has not been able to show that we *can* think and speak of what is not. Equally the attempt to prove that we *cannot* think or speak of 'what is not in any way at all', despite its initial success, has ended up in a no-man's land, where non-being can be neither affirmed nor denied, since in either case we should have to *utter* the *unutterable*.²⁵⁴

In this twilight world, where non-being can be neither affirmed nor denied, the attempts to define both images and falsehood lead to deliberate inconsistencies, to shifting values in the meanings of expressions which will not find their proper use and their proper place until the Stranger comes to his own analysis of what is not, and to his own solution to the problem of falsehood.²⁵⁵

For example, in the attempt to define an image, the questions and answers exchanged between the Stranger and Theaetetus shift from talk of what is 'other' (240A9: ἕτερον) to talk of what is 'contrary' (240B5: ἐναντίον), sliding over the very distinction that the Stranger will establish between those two terms when he comes to his own analysis of negation and of contrariety.²⁵⁶

There is the same ambivalence in the preliminary moves towards defining falsehood (240C7-D10). The Stranger asks Theaetetus if he will grant that "an opinion [or a judgement] which is false 'opines' [or judges] things that are contrary to things that are" (240D6-7: ψευδὴς δ' αὖ δόξα ἔσται τάναντία τοῖς οὖσι δοξάζουσα, ἢ πῶς;). Theaetetus at once agrees (240D8: οὕτως· τάναντία), as he does to the Stranger's next question: "Do you mean then that an opinion [or judgement] that is false 'opines' [or judges] the things that are not?" (240D9: λέγεις ἄρα τὰ μὴ ὄντα δοξάζειν τὴν ψευδῇ δόξαν;) The implication of Theaetetus' assent to those two successive questions (240D6-7D9) can hardly be other than that "the things that are not" (240D9: τὰ μὴ ὄντα) are counted as 'contrary' to "things that are" (240D6: τοῖς οὖσι).

Theaetetus here fairly obviously assumes that the *contrariety* of truth and falsehood goes hand in hand with a *contrariety* of being and non-being. When he comes to give his own account of truth and falsehood, the Stranger

²⁵³ *Soph.* 237B2-E7 and 238A1-C11.

²⁵⁴ *Soph.* 238D1-9C8. Cf. § LXI above.

²⁵⁵ When I speak of 'deliberate inconsistencies' I mean of course the inconsistencies that Plato has planted in this part of the dialogue, leaving open the nice question of how far the Stranger is intended to be Plato's *alter ego*. Does the Stranger, as omniscient as the author of the dialogue, choose the path he does merely as a way of enlightening Theaetetus? Or is the dialogue, for the Stranger as for Theaetetus, intended to be a voyage of discovery?

²⁵⁶ For the distinction, see 257B1-C4. For my account of this passage (often badly mauled by the commentators), see O'Brien (1995) 57-63.

will abandon just that assumption. In the Stranger's own account of the sentence 'Theaetetus flies' (*Soph.* 262E3-3D5), the *opposition* of true and false will be maintained, but will no longer be founded on a *contrariety* of being and of non-being.²⁵⁷

§ LXVI

There is the same ambiguity, the same deliberate confusion, in the questions and answers that follow, and that lead directly to the attempted definition of a *logos* that is false.

The definition itself is merely the converse of the definition of truth that we find even in non-philosophical texts of the period, where a statement that is true says of things that *are*, that they *are*, and of things that *are not*, that they *are not*.²⁵⁸ Conversely, in the *Sophist*, Theaetetus and the Stranger agree that a statement that is false says of things that *are*, that they *are not*, and of things that *are not*, that they *are*.²⁵⁹

But that simple symmetry is deliberately disturbed in the questions-and-answers that precede the definition (240E1-9). Questioned on what will be the *second* limb of the definition, Theaetetus is led to admit that "if one is ever going to lie about something even the least little bit (240E3-4: εἴπερ ψεύσεται ποτέ τίς τι καὶ κατὰ βραχύ), then yes, it must be (δεῖ γε) that things that are not (τὰ μὴ ὄντα) are in a way (εἶναι πως)." ²⁶⁰ On the contrary, in what will prove to be the *first* limb of the definition, Theaetetus agrees to a quite different form of opposition: a statement that is false will claim, of "things that are altogether" (240E5: τὰ πάντως ὄντα), that they "are not in any way at all" (*ibid.*: μηδαμῶς εἶναι).

Presented in this form, the anticipation of the *first* limb of the definition maintains the notion of 'what is not in any way at all', as defined at the beginning of the first session of torture: the adverb (μηδαμῶς) is the same in the two passages (237B7 and 240E5), and the difference lies only in the use of a singular (237B7-8: τὸ μηδαμῶς ὄν) or a plural (240E5: μηδαμῶς εἶναι τὰ πάντως ὄντα).

Not so Theaetetus' anticipation of what will be the *second* limb of the definition. Here, the idea that things that are not "are in a way" (240E3:

²⁵⁷ For the Stranger's own account of truth and falsehood, see 262E3-3D5. For the point that the *opposition* of true and false is here no longer founded on a *contrariety* of being and of non-being, see O'Brien (1995) 86-7.

²⁵⁸ See, for example, Xenophon, *Anabasis* iv 4.15: ἀληθεύσαι [...] τὰ ὄντα τε ὡς ὄντα καὶ τὰ μὴ ὄντα ὡς οὐκ ὄντα. Cf. Kittel (1933-1979), s.v. ἀλήθεια, C I (Band i, p. 239 n. 18).

²⁵⁹ The Stranger declares, 240E10-1A1: λόγος [...] ψευδής [...] νομισθῆσεται τὰ τε ὄντα λέγων μὴ εἶναι καὶ τὰ μὴ ὄντα εἶναι.

²⁶⁰ The order of words in the original, 240E3-4: εἶναι πως τὰ μὴ ὄντα δεῖ γε, εἴπερ ψεύσεται ποτέ τίς τι καὶ κατὰ βραχύ. For the value I give here to γε ("one of the subtlest and most elusive of particles", Denniston [1966] 115), see Denniston (1966) 130 (s.v. γε, § 1 [11], [i]): "Affirmative answers to a question or statement." Hence my "yes".

εἶναι πως) is surely intended, on the contrary, as a nod in the direction of the qualified use of *is* and of *is not* that the Stranger will set out to establish when he comes to tackle Parmenides' own *logos* on the following page of the dialogue (cf. 241D5-7). If Theaetetus' anticipation of the *first* limb of the definition looks to the past, his anticipation of the *second* limb looks to the future.

All that is just as it should be. As Theaetetus plaintively remarks, after the attempted definitions of images and of falsehood: "We are constantly compelled to tack on *what is* to *what is not*, despite having agreed, only a moment ago, that of all things that is the most impossible."²⁶¹ The point is that 'what is not' (cf. 241B1: τῷ [...] μὴ ὄντι) has been specifically construed, at the beginning of the first session of torture, as 'what is not in any at all' (cf. 237B7-8: τὸ μηδαμῶς ὄν). And that construction, that assumption, leaves no room for any distinction between non-being as 'other' (240A9: ἕτερον), as 'contrary' (240B5: ἐναντίον), as 'not at all' (240E5: μηδαμῶς) or as 'in a way' (240E3: πως)—all the distinctions which will be needed when eventually we arrive at the Stranger's own account of images and of falsehood.²⁶²

§ LXVII

Logically and dramatically, therefore, we have reached a turning point in the movement of the dialogue. For a brief moment (241B4 sqq.) the whole great enterprise hangs fire. Theaetetus is close to despair (241C2-3): will it ever be possible to nail the Sophist down? For even if Parmenides has been reduced to silence, he has not yet been defeated. And so long as Parmenides has not been defeated, the Sophist can therefore still refuse to admit (241A3) the possibility of falsehood.

But the Sophist will soon be deprived of his powerful protector. For from this moment on (241C4 sqq.) the stage is set for a change of scene. Parmenides' own *logos* will now be subject to torture (241D5 sqq.). Parmenides had denied that 'things that are not, are' or, in the words of the Stranger, that 'what is not, is'.²⁶³ The Stranger will now set out, for the first time, to prove

²⁶¹ This is one of the none-too-frequent occasions when Theaetetus is allowed to utter more than the obvious query or the conventional expression of surprise. He concludes his little intervention, 241B1-3: τῷ γὰρ μὴ ὄντι τὸ ὄν προσάπτειν ἡμᾶς πολλάκις ἀναγκάζεσθαι, διομολογησάμενους νυνδὲ τοῦτο εἶναι πάντων ἀδυνατότατον. The 'agreement' (cf. 241B2: διομολογησάμενους) looks back specifically to 238A4-9. Theaetetus' remark is tacked on to the account of falsehood (240C7-1B3), but applies no less to the attempted definition of an image (239C9-40C6).

²⁶² The Stranger's 'own account' is inaugurated by the second session of torture (241D5 sqq.) and will centre on the analysis of the five 'very great kinds' (cf. 254D4-5) and the theory of the 'parts of otherness' (257C5-8C5). These topics form the kernel of O'Brien (1995), and are therefore left aside in the present brief essay.

²⁶³ For the difference between singular and plural, see again the final footnote in § xxxv above.

explicitly, against Parmenides, that, on the contrary, “there is a sense in which what is not, is” (cf. 241D6-7: τό τε μὴ ὄν ὥς ἔστι κατά τι) and that “contrariwise, what is, in a way, is not” (cf. 241D7: καὶ τὸ ὄν αὖ πάλιν ὥς οὐκ ἔστι πῇ).

The second session of torture is about to begin (241D5 sqq.).

Part eight

§ LXVIII

Many pages later, the Stranger will again quote the pair of verses that he had originally recited from Parmenides’ poem.²⁶⁴ But his attitude will now be entirely different.

Not only have we, for our part, shown, of things that are not, that they are; but we have also brought out into the open the form that there turns out to be of what is not.²⁶⁵

And almost in the same breath:

The part of the nature of the other that is placed in opposition to the being of each thing, that is what we dared to say is the very thing that is really what is not.²⁶⁶

On hearing those words, our first reaction is, and is meant to be, that the Stranger emphasises his rejection of Parmenides’ thesis. The Stranger has succeeded in giving meaning to the statement that Parmenides had forbidden (‘things that are not, are’). He has succeeded in defining ‘the very thing that is really what is not’.

But, on reflection, the reader of the dialogue is also meant to appreciate that to count this as a simple disavowal of Parmenides’ thesis is an oversimplification. For although the Stranger has defined ‘the very thing that is really what is not’ (258E2-3), nonetheless the newly-fledged form of non-being is not at all the same as the non-being that Theaetetus had all too boldly thought to utter earlier in the dialogue, namely the non-being that is not ‘in any way at all’.²⁶⁷

²⁶⁴ Parmenides, fr. 7.1-2. *Soph.* 258D1-3. Cf. 237A4-9 (the Stranger’s original quotation). ‘Many pages later’: for the intervening pages (241D5-58C11), see again O’Brien (1985).

²⁶⁵ *Soph.* 258D5-7: ἡμεῖς δέ γε οὐ μόνον τὰ μὴ ὄντα ὥς ἔστιν ἀπεδείξαμεν, ἀλλὰ καὶ τὸ εἶδος ὃ τυγχάνει ὄν τοῦ μὴ ὄντος ἀπεφηνάμεθα.

²⁶⁶ *Soph.* 258E2-3: τὸ πρὸς τὸ ὄν ἐκάστου μόριον αὐτῆς [sc. τῆς θατέρου φύσεως] ἀντιτιθέμενον ἐτολήσαμεν εἰπεῖν ὡς αὐτὸ τοῦτο ἔστιν ὄντως τὸ μὴ ὄν. For the reading ἐκάστου (and not ἐκαστον), see O’Brien (1991); cf. O’Brien (1995) 66-71.

²⁶⁷ *Soph.* 237B7-8: τὸ μηδαμῶς ὄν. See §§ LIII-LIV above.

§ LXIX

The difference between the Stranger's new form of non-being and 'what is not in any way at all' is precisely what is meant to be brought home to the reader by the Stranger's paradoxical claim to have recognised "the form that there turns out *to be* of what *is not*" (*Soph.* 258D6-7: τὸ εἶδος ὃ τυγχάνει ὄν τοῦ μὴ ὄντος) and by his no less paradoxical point that the form of non-being "is *really* what *is not*" (258E3: ἐστὶν ὄντως τὸ μὴ ὄν).

Unfortunately for the English reader, neither paradox is easily translatable.²⁶⁸ Indeed the second paradox (258E2-3) is not really translatable at all, since in English we have no adverb corresponding to *be* or to *is*. The Greekless reader will have to imagine the effect as being something like: "is *beingly* (ὄντως) not *being* (ὄν)". And yet the paradox is crucial. For the point of the Stranger's argument is precisely that the part of otherness "placed in opposition to the being of each thing" nonetheless participates in being, and therefore *is*, even though what it *is* is what *is not*.²⁶⁹

For the Stranger's analysis, in the pages preceding his second quotation from Parmenides, has shown that the form of non-being is not the contrary of being. Contraries, or so the Stranger has let it be seen in the course of his argument, do not participate in one another: rest and movement are contraries, and neither therefore participates in the other. But there is nothing that does not participate in being. Therefore there can be no contrary to being.²⁷⁰

Hence the paradox: even the part of otherness that is set in opposition to being, and is therefore non-being, nonetheless, like all the parts of otherness, participates in being, and therefore 'is'. Precisely because it participates in being, the form of non-being cannot be an—impossible and inconceivable—contrary to being.²⁷¹

§ LXX

In the light of that conclusion, the Stranger's repeated allusions to 'contraries' earlier in the dialogue, take on a fresh significance.²⁷²

In their attempted definitions of an image and of falsehood, Theaetetus and the Stranger had spoken of a contrariety both between "what is not true

²⁶⁸ For the difficulty of translating the first paradox (*Soph.* 258D6: τὸ εἶδος ὃ τυγχάνει ὄν τοῦ μὴ ὄντος), see the first footnote in § xxxvi above.

²⁶⁹ All the parts of otherness participate in being (258A7-10), including therefore the part of otherness that is opposed to being, and is therefore 'not-being' (258A11-B4). For a more detailed account of how the Stranger arrives at his paradoxical definition of a form of non-being ('a form which *is* of what *is not*'), see O'Brien (1995), esp. 57-71.

²⁷⁰ Rest and movement are "most contrary to each other" (250A8-10: ἐναντιώτατα [...] ἀλλήλοις). To seize the Stranger's point that rest and movement do not participate in each other, the reader of the *Sophist* will have to overcome the unthinking enthusiasm that has greeted the theory of 'Pauline predication' put forward by Vlastos in his interpretation of the *Sophist* and other dialogues. For details, see O'Brien (1995) 103-10.

²⁷¹ See again O'Brien (1995), esp. 57-71.

²⁷² See §§ LXV-LXVI above.

[or genuine]" and "what is true [or genuine]" (240B5: τὸ μὴ ἀληθινόν [...] ἐναντίον ἀληθείας) and, by clear implication, between "the things that are not" (240D9: τὰ μὴ ὄντα) and "things that are" (240D6: τοῖς ὄνσι).²⁷³

According to the Stranger's later account of contrariety, *what is not* as the contrary of *what is* would have to be something that did not participate in being.²⁷⁴ But is that not precisely what is implied by Theaetetus' initial agreement, on behalf of the first *logos*, to re-define 'what is not' as 'what is not in any way at all'?²⁷⁵

For 'what is not in any way at all' would have to be something which—impossibly—did not even participate in being, for only so could it *not* be 'in any way at all'. And precisely such an—impossible and inconceivable—contrary of being is what the Stranger dismisses, in the lines immediately following his claim to have established a form of 'what is not'.

Do not let anyone tell us therefore that we declare that what is not is the *contrary* of being, and that we dare say of that that it is. For as far as any *contrary* of being goes, we have long ago said good-bye to any question of its being or of its not being, of its having a *logos* or indeed of its being altogether without a *logos*...²⁷⁶

The reference to what is 'without a *logos*' is clearly meant to remind us of the non-being that Stranger had condemned as *alogos* in his interrogation of the beliefs of mortals.²⁷⁷ And the point we are intended to appreciate is that the *non-being* which the Stranger has now established as *being* (258D5-E5) is not at all the same as the non-being that Parmenides had condemned, the non-being which the Stranger and Theaetetus had agreed to reformulate as 'what is not in any way at all'.²⁷⁸

The non-being which the Stranger had condemned, on behalf of Parmenides, as *alogos*, the non-being that had been defined as 'what is not in any way at all', is not to be confused with the Stranger's own form of non-being. Non-being as 'what is not in any way at all', non-being as an—impossible and inconceivable—contrary of being, is indeed swept aside as irrelevant in the light of the Stranger's new definition of what is not.

²⁷³ For the implication (given by Theaetetus' assent to the two questions, 240D6-7: ψευδὴς δ' αὖ δόξα ἔσται τάναντία τοῖς οὐσι δοξάζουσα, ἢ πῶς; and 240D9: λέγεις ἄρα τὰ μὴ ὄντα δοξάζειν τὴν ψευδῇ δόξαν;), see § LXV above.

²⁷⁴ Again, see O'Brien (1995), esp. 57-71.

²⁷⁵ *Soph.* 237B7-8: τὸ μηδαμῶς ὄν. See again §§ LIII-LIV above.

²⁷⁶ *Soph.* 258E6-9A1: μὴ τοίνυν ἡμᾶς εἴπη τις ὅτι τούναντίον τοῦ ὄντος τὸ μὴ ὄν ἀποφανομένοι τολμῶμεν λέγειν ὡς ἔστιν. ἡμεῖς γὰρ περὶ μὲν ἐναντίου τινὸς αὐτῷ χαίρειν πάσαι λέγομεν, εἴτ' ἔστιν εἴτε μὴ, λόγον ἔχον ἢ καὶ παντάπασιν ἄλογον. The καὶ in ἢ καὶ (259A1) I see as adding emphasis to the second limb of the disjunction. Cf. Denniston (1966) 306 (s.v. καί, § II B [7], [iii]: ἢ καί).

²⁷⁷ *Soph.* 238B10 and E6: ἄλογον. Cf. § LVIII above.

²⁷⁸ "What is not in any way at all", *Soph.* 237B7-8: τὸ μηδαμῶς ὄν. See §§ LIII-LIV above. Cf. "what just simply is not", *Soph.* 238C9: τὸ μὴ ὄν αὐτὸ καθ' αὐτό. See especially the final footnote of § LX above.

§ LXXI

At the same time, in the text I last quoted (258E6-9A1) there is another, more subtle, reference to the earlier passage, and to the first session of torture.

Following his second quotation from Parmenides, the Stranger twice uses the word *dare*. First: "The part of the nature of the other that is placed in opposition to the being of each thing, that is what we *dared* (ἐτολμήσαμεν) to say is the very thing that is really what is not."²⁷⁹ This is followed by: "Do not let anyone tell us therefore that we declare that what is not is the contrary of being, and that we *dare* (τολμῶμεν) say of that that it is."²⁸⁰ This second use of τολμῶμεν (258E7) exactly contradicts, and is meant to contradict, the use of the same verb in the Stranger's question to Theaetetus at the beginning of the first session of torture: "Tell me: we do, I suppose, *dare* to utter (τολμῶμεν) what is not in any way at all?"²⁸¹ That use of the word had itself looked back to the Stranger's opening account of the first *logos*, a *logos* which "has *dared* (τετόλμηκεν) to lay down that what is not, is".²⁸² Indeed, in these four successive uses of the same verb *dare* (τετόλμηκεν, 237A3; τολμῶμεν, 237B8; ἐτολμήσαμεν, 258E2-3; and again τολμῶμεν, 258E7), we see a good example of the artistry, both philosophical and dramatic, of which Plato is an adept.

The first *logos* had *dared* (237A3: τετόλμηκεν) to utter what seemed, at the time, to be an obvious contradiction, 'what is not, is'. And indeed the contradiction becomes not only obvious but inevitable, once the Stranger and Theaetetus *dare* (cf. 237B8: τολμῶμεν) define 'what is not' as 'what is not in any way at all'. 'What *is not* in any way at all' cannot possibly *be*. That double act of *daring* (τετόλμηκεν, 237A3, and τολμῶμεν, 237B8) can therefore only end up, as it does, on the rocks of self-contradiction (238D1-9C8), having already passed through an increasingly bleak terrain where, in attempting to utter 'what is not', one cannot even 'speak' (237B2-E7), nor indeed even 'utter' what it is that one would speak of (238A1-C11).

But those increasingly dire consequences follow only because 'what is not' has been defined, as Parmenides indeed would have wished it to be, as 'what is not in any way at all'.²⁸³ Once the first *logos* has been defined to

²⁷⁹ *Soph.* 258E2-3. Cf. § LXVIII above.

²⁸⁰ *Soph.* 258E6-7. See the section preceding this (§ LXX).

²⁸¹ *Soph.* 237B7-8. Cf. § LIX above.

²⁸² *Soph.* 237A3-4. See again § LIX above.

²⁸³ "As Parmenides would have wished it to be." That is not merely fanciful. When Parmenides' goddess sets out to prove, against the opinions of mortals as given in fr. 7.1-2, that nothing can come into being or be destroyed, out of nothing or into nothing, she appeals explicitly to the 'decision' that has already been taken (fr. 8.15-18: κρίσις [...] κέκριται) in favour of *is* and against *is not*. The use of the perfect tense (fr. 8.16: κέκριται) looks back to the modal disjunction of the two ways as established in fr. 2 (see § XII above). The non-being which the goddess condemns in the opinions of mortals (fr. 7.1-2) is therefore, for Parmenides, the

include what one might perhaps call full-blown Parmenidean non-being ('what is not in any way at all'), then the claim that 'what is not, is' cannot fail to be other than what it had indeed at first seemed to be, a contradiction in terms.²⁸⁴

Contrast this with the Stranger's later use of the same verb. When the Stranger gives his own account of how it is that 'things that are not, are', he too shows *daring*, but *daring* of a different kind. The Stranger *dares* (cf. 258E2-3: ἐτολμήσαμεν) to say that there is a form which both *is* and *is not*. But, as the preceding pages of the dialogue have shown, *is* and *is not* do not act here as contraries: the form of what is not *is*, because it participates in being, *is not*, not because it fails to participate in being, but because it participates in otherness in relation to being.²⁸⁵

The Stranger's own daring, unlike the daring of the first *logos*, is not therefore a daring which leads to self-contradiction. The Stranger takes care to bring home that point by his fourth use of *dare*. In *daring* (cf. 258E2-3: ἐτολμήσαμεν) to include, among things that are, a form of 'what is not', the Stranger and Theaetetus do not *dare* (cf. 258E7: τολμῶμεν) to say of what would be the contrary of being, and therefore of what would not participate at all in being, that it is. They do not therefore repeat the *daring* (τετόλημκεν, 237A3 and τολμῶμεν, 237B8) of the first *logos*, a *logos* that proved to be no *logos* at all.²⁸⁶

For with his new conception of 'what is not' the Stranger does not for one moment intend to resurrect the first *logos* with the meaning—or the lack of meaning—that had been given to it by the definition of 'what is not' as 'what is not in any way at all'.

§ LXXII

Does Parmenides therefore stand 'condemned', as Peck and as Notomi would have us believe?²⁸⁷ The very question betrays that the Stranger's conclusion has not been understood. The Stranger has given meaning to the claim that Parmenides denies, the claim that 'things that are not, are'. He has done so, by defining a form that *is* of what *is not*. But the Stranger does not

same as the non-being which we have already been told (fr. 2.7-8) "you could not know, nor could you tell to others". More on this in a moment (§ LXXIII below).

²⁸⁴ "Full-blown Parmenidean non-being." "What is not in any way at all" (*Soph.* 237B7-8) I take it corresponds well enough to the "is not" and the "what is not" of the second way (Parmenides, fr. 2.5-8), where the goddess had said explicitly (fr. 2.5): "it is necessary not to be." The 'necessity' I take it will apply both to *is not* (cf. fr. 2.5: οὐκ ἔστι) and to *what is not* (cf. fr. 2.7: τό [...] μὴ εἶν). See again § LIII above.

²⁸⁵ This is the burden of O'Brien (1995) 43-71.

²⁸⁶ "Ἄλογον at 259A1 looks back to ἄλογον at 238B10 and E6 and therefore to the paradox whereby the λόγος initially subject to torture (237B2), in being shown to be ἄλογος (238B10 and E6), proves to be no λόγος at all. See the conclusion to § LVIII above.

²⁸⁷ Peck, (1952) 32-6. Notomi, (1999) 173-9. Cf. § XLVIII above.

therefore claim to have shown that we can think or speak of 'what is not in any way at all'.

A non-being which is not in any way at all, a non-being which does not therefore participate in being, a non-being which would be—*sit venia verbo!*—an impossible and inconceivable contrary to being,—that non-being, remains, for the Stranger and for Theaetetus, as unthinkable and as unspeakable as it had been for Parmenides. The non-being which the Stranger has defined as the form of non-being is not therefore the non-being that Parmenides had warned us could not be thought of and could not be spoken of.

Indeed, if the Stranger has been able to give meaning to the first *logos* ('things that are not, are', 'what is not, is'), it is precisely because that *logos* is no longer understood as implying any reference to 'what is not in any way at all'. The Stranger is able to reinstate the first *logos*, precisely because he makes no attempt to rescue 'what is not in any way at all' from the 'unutterable' and 'unsayable' sheer blankness to which it had been consigned both by himself and by Parmenides.²⁸⁸

"Plato," in the *Sophist*, "is condemning, not endorsing, Parmenides."²⁸⁹ That disjunction no longer has meaning. The Stranger does indeed end up by asserting what Parmenides had denied, namely that 'things that are not, are'. But in doing so he does not claim that we can think or speak of 'what is not in any way at all'. To insist on categorising the Stranger's conclusion as either condemnation or endorsement of Parmenides shows merely that one has missed the meaning of the dialogue.

Conclusion

§ LXXIII

That briefest of brief outlines of the strategy of the central part of the *Sophist* is indispensable if we are to understand aright the paradox of the relation of Parmenides and Plato, and in particular if we are to understand aright the paradox whereby the Stranger of Plato's dialogue appears to endorse the goddess' condemnation of non-being in fr. 2, and yet refuses to endorse her condemnation of the claim that "things that are not, are", as stated in her account of what I have called the 'third' way in fr. 7.²⁹⁰

²⁸⁸ "Unutterable" (ἀφθεγκτον): *Soph.* 238C10. "Unsayable" (οὐ [...] φατόν): Parmenides, fr. 8.8. "What is not in any way at all" (*Soph.* 237B7-8: τὸ μηδ'οὐδὲ ὄν) I am treating here as a form of words which will also cover what I called a moment ago (§ LXXI) "full-blown Parmenidean non-being".

²⁸⁹ Notomi (1999) 177 n. 35. Peck (1952) 36. Cf. § XLVIII above.

²⁹⁰ I return to the theme of § XXXIV above.

For when the Stranger ‘tortures’ the thesis that Parmenides himself had condemned in fr. 7, the thesis that “things that are not, are” (fr. 7.1: εἶναι μὴ ἑόντα), and especially when he concludes that we cannot think, or speak, of “what is not in any way at all” (τὸ μηδαμῶς ὄν, 237B7-8), his argument can hardly fail to be taken as implying endorsement of the condemnation of non-being that the goddess had herself put forward so forcefully in her initial statement of the two ways in fr. 2. But in his second session of ‘torture’ (241D5 sqq.), the Stranger refuses to join with Parmenides in condemning the thesis that “things that are not, are”, and claims, on the contrary, that “there is a sense in which what is not, is” (cf. 241D6-7: τό τε μὴ ὄν ὡς ἔστι κατά τι).

From the goddess’ point of view, the Stranger’s change of position, his shift of allegiance, would have appeared impossibly inconsistent. Defence of the third way (the claim that “things that are not, are”) must imply, for the goddess, acceptance, not only of the third way, but of the second (“is not” and “it is necessary not to be”), since in both cases we claim to speak and to think of “what is not” (τό [...] μὴ ἑόν, fr. 2.7) or of “things that are not” (μὴ ἑόντα, fr. 7.1).

Conversely, if we agree with the goddess that the second way is “a road of which we can learn nothing” (fr. 2.6), then we are also committed, or so at least the goddess would claim, to condemning the opinions of mortals, and their foolish claim that “things that are not, are” (fr. 7.1). For the goddess would not allow that there can be any difference between the non-being condemned in her statement of the second way (fr. 2.6) and the non-beings (the “things that are not”) spoken of in the third way (fr. 7.1).

The Eleatic Stranger of Plato’s *Sophist* does not agree. He will aim to reinstate the claim that “things that are not, are”, while maintaining that we cannot think or speak of what is not in any way at all. If the non-being of the second way is taken as equivalent to “what is not in any way at all” (τὸ μηδαμῶς ὄν, 237B7-8), to “what just simply is not” (τὸ μὴ ὄν αὐτὸ καθ’ αὐτό, 238C9), as earlier I suggested it should be, then the Eleatic Stranger agrees with the goddess in her condemnation of non-being in fr. 2, and yet, at the same time, he disagrees with the goddess’ condemnation, in fr. 7, of the opinions of mortals.²⁹¹

§ LXXIV

But even so simple a statement of the relation of the poem of Parmenides to Plato’s *Sophist* calls at once for one crucial disclaimer. The reason I have had to introduce my last sentence but one with a conditional clause (“If...”) is that any attempt to distinguish between the non-being of fr. 2.5-8 and the non-beings of fr. 7.1 runs counter to the assumption of the goddess in her

²⁹¹ See § XIV and § XXII above.

poem. From that point of view therefore—from the goddess' own point of view—the attempt I made earlier to explain to Miss Anscombe the point of Parmenides' condemnation of non-being in fr. 2 by appealing to the *Sophist* was illegitimate.²⁹²

For the whole point of Plato's argument in the *Sophist* will be that, despite having argued that we cannot think, nor even speak, of 'what is not in any way at all' (237B7-8), nonetheless we can, and do, speak of 'non-being' whenever we speak of all the many things that both participate in being, and therefore *are*, and yet also participate in otherness in relation to being, and therefore *are not* (cf. 256D5-E7).

That distinction forms no part of the argument of the goddess, and therefore to present the non-being denied in Parmenides' poem, in fr. 2, as answering to only one of the two kinds of non-being introduced by the Stranger in Plato's *Sophist* will necessarily fail to do justice to the 'argument' of the goddess, whose condemnation of the opinions of mortals is founded precisely on the absence of any such distinction.

But, for the historian of philosophy and for the reader of Plato's dialogue, the absence of that distinction in the poem of Parmenides is essential to an appreciation of the way in which the Eleatic Stranger marshals his arguments in the *Sophist*. For the Stranger will aim to establish the existence of a form of non-being ("a form which is of what is not," 258D6), which nonetheless has nothing to do with any, impossible and unthinkable, "contrary" of being (cf. 258E7: ἐναντίου τινός).

That distinction sets a gulf between the non-being of fr. 2.5-8 and the non-beings of fr. 7.1, a gulf which the goddess herself would have failed to recognise, despite the fact that it is the goddess' own words which set the scene, philosophically, for the Stranger's distinction.²⁹³

§ LXXV

That same conclusion will allow us to return to the text of the *Sophist*, unencumbered by simplistic categories of 'endorsement' or 'condemnation'.²⁹⁴

For the target of the Stranger's criticism in the *Sophist* has not been Parmenides' assertion that 'what is not' is 'unthinkable' and 'nameless', nor even primarily Parmenides' denial of the thesis that 'things that are not are'.²⁹⁵ The Stranger's primary target has been the unspoken assumption that underlay both that assertion and that denial, namely the assumption that

²⁹² See § XIV above.

²⁹³ This is the burden of O'Brien, (1995). I am utterly bemused by the failure of one French reviewer even to begin to grasp the point. See Castel-Bouchouchi, (1998) 419: "*Son logos est insituable...*" Let us hope that, given time, Mme Castel-Bouchouchi will be able to find her way in a world that is not her own.

²⁹⁴ Cf. Notomi (1999) 177 n. 35; Peck (1952) 36. See § XLVIII above.

²⁹⁵ 'Unthinkable' and 'nameless': see fr. 8.17. Parmenides' denial of the thesis that 'things that are not, are': see fr. 7.1-2.

there can be, so to speak, only one meaning of ‘what is not’, namely ‘what is not in any way at all’.²⁹⁶

That is why, in the opening session of torture (237B2 sqq.), the Stranger’s first question to Theaetetus (237B7-8) had been: “We do, I suppose, dare to utter what is not in any way at all?” The Stranger has rightly seen that Parmenides’ opposition to the belief of mortals stems not simply from his denial of the obvious contradiction whereby ‘things that are not, are’, but, more radically, from Parmenides’ assumption that the non-being implied in that sentence is the non-being that the goddess had already declared, in her opening statement of the two ways (fr. 2.7-8), “you could not know”, the non-being which ‘is not in any way at all’ and which is therefore totally ‘unknowable’.²⁹⁷

That too is why, in his first pair of arguments (237B2-E7 and 238A1-C11), the Stranger defends Parmenides. If ‘what is not’ is taken as ‘what is not in any way at all’, then it will be true that any attempt to think or speak of such an object is indeed impossible. For to give meaning to the sentence ‘things that are not, are’, we need to abandon the initial assumption that ‘what is not’ is ‘what is not in any way at all’.

In abandoning that assumption, as he does once he sets out to torture Parmenides’ own *logos* (241D1 sqq.), the Stranger does not aim to prove that, contrary to what Parmenides had claimed, we can think or speak of ‘what is not in any way at all’. Quite the reverse. The Stranger argues in effect that, although we cannot think or speak of ‘what is not in any way at all’, or of what (paraphrasing Parmenides) ‘necessarily’ is not, nonetheless we can, and do, speak of ‘what is not’, provided only that we give that expression the meaning which the Stranger has found for it, a meaning which we must explicitly recognise is distinct from any notion of an impossible and inconceivable contrary to being.

Hence the importance of the Stranger’s reference (however dismissive) to a ‘contrary’ of being immediately following his second quotation from Parmenides (258E6-9A1). Just as the absence of any distinction between what I called a moment ago two ‘kinds’ of non-being is essential to our understanding of Parmenides, so an awareness of that distinction is needed for an understanding of the *Sophist*. The Stranger’s new definition of non-

²⁹⁶ I add an apotropaic *so to speak*, since the ‘meaning’ in question is no meaning at all. For what I call Parmenides’ “unspeakable assumption”, see also § LIII above.

²⁹⁷ ‘Unknowable’ (ἄγνωστον). Parmenides does not use this word, though it would perhaps be easily enough implied by the conjunction of οὐτε γὰρ ἂν γνοίης (fr. 2.7-8) and ἀνόητον (fr. 8.17). I use the word here, because of its use in a famous passage of the *Republic*, V, 477A3-4: “What is altogether is altogether knowable; what is not in any way is in every way unknowable.” The latter part of that sentence (μὴ ὄν δὲ μηδ’ αὖτε πάντῃ ἄγνωστον) represents exactly the view that the Stranger of the *Sophist* takes of the non-being implied in Parmenides’ own statement of the opinions of mortals (“things that are not, are”), and therefore of the non-being which the Stranger himself, in his own analysis of that same statement, will discard.

being (258D6: 'a form that *is* of what *is not*') has meaning precisely because it is distinguished from 'what is not in any way at all',—the old, monolithic Parmenidean non-being, which in the Stranger's analysis becomes an impossible and inconceivable contrary to being.

From that point of view, the Stranger has subverted the Parmenidean conception of what is not. He has done so, not because he has 'condemned' Parmenides' thesis that what is not cannot be spoken of nor thought of, but because he has found a new meaning for 'what is not', a meaning quite different from the meaning—or the lack of meaning!—that Parmenides had given to the non-being of the second way. Or perhaps one might say more simply: the Stranger finds a meaning for 'what is not', where Parmenides had found none.

§ LXXVI

Understanding of Plato's *Sophist* cannot therefore be dissociated from our understanding of the poem of Parmenides, and *vice versa*.

To understand the poem of Parmenides we need to appreciate that the goddess is working with a single conception of non-being, an appreciation which we can best arrive at by seizing the distinction between the two uses of non-being that are established in Plato's *Sophist* and yet, at the same time, refusing to read back that distinction into the poem of Parmenides.

Understanding the *Sophist* requires us, on the contrary, to appreciate that the Stranger arrives at his new definition of 'what is not' by consciously distancing himself from the way in which Parmenides had thought of non-being, nearly one hundred years before.

The distinction between the two 'kinds' of non-being is, in both cases, the same. But where the Stranger consciously and deliberately marshals his arguments in the light of that distinction, Parmenides, on the contrary, produces the arguments he does because the Stranger's distinction forms no part of his conscious self.²⁹⁸

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²⁹⁸ Some of the implications of this style of conclusion for how I understand the history of philosophy are spelt out in O'Brien (1993).

²⁹⁹ So far five fascicules have been published, from 1980 to 1997, taking us as far as διώνυχος.

- Ayer, A. J. (1940) *The Foundations of Empirical Knowledge* (London).
- (1946) *Introduction* to the 2nd edition of *Language, Truth and Logic* (London) 5- 26.³⁰⁰
- Badham, C. (1865) *Platonis 'Euthydemus' et 'Laches', Praefixa Est Epistola ad Senatam Lugdunensem Batavorum Auctore C. B.* (Londini/Ienae).
- Burnet, J. (1900) *Platonis Opera Recognovit Brevique Adnotatione Critica Instruxit*, in the *Scriptorum Classicorum Bibliotheca Oxoniensis*, tomus i, *Tetralogias I-II Continens*, 1st edn (Oxonii).
- (1905) *Platonis Opera Recognovit Brevique Adnotatione Critica Instruxit*, in the *Scriptorum Classicorum Bibliotheca Oxoniensis*, tomus i, *Tetralogias I-II Continens*, 2nd edn (Oxonii).³⁰¹
- (1914) 'Vindiciae Platonicae I', *Classical Quarterly* 8: 230-6.
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- Chance, T. H. (1992) *Plato's 'Euthydemus', Analysis of What Is and Is Not Philosophy* (Berkeley/Los Angeles/Oxford).
- Chantraine, P. (1942) *Grammaire Homérique, (Phonétique et Morphologie)* (Paris).³⁰⁴
- (1953) *Grammaire Homérique*, tome ii, *Syntaxe* (Paris).
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- Cordero, N.-L. (1979) 'Les Deux Chemins de Parménide dans les Fragments 6 et 7', *Phronesis* 24: 1-32.
- (1993) *Platon, 'Le Sophiste', Traduction Inédite, Introduction et Notes* (Paris).
- Cornford, F. M. (1935) *Plato's Theory of Knowledge, The 'Theaetetus' and the 'Sophist' of Plato Translated with a Running Commentary* (London/New York).
- Curtius, G. (1880) *The Greek Verb, Its Structure and Development*, English translation by A. S. Wilkins and E. B. England (London).³⁰⁵

³⁰⁰ The first edition was published, under the same title, in 1936.

³⁰¹ Writers on Plato still seem to be unaware of the existence of Burnet's second edition of the works of Plato, as quoted above. To return to only the most recent example (see the first footnote in § xx above): Mary Margaret McCabe, (1994) p. xiii, who really should have known better, quotes Burnet's edition of Plato as "1900-1903" on the preliminary pages of her book entitled *Plato's Individuals*, with no reference to any further edition, either on that page or later in the volume, despite her welcome assurance, p. xiii, that: "Full bibliographical information is provided in the bibliography." Burnet himself, (1920) 132, had rightly protested against the nefarious practice of failing to take account of the later edition. Admittedly, some indulgence may perhaps be shown to the neophyte, since the publisher, on the *verso* of the title page of the second edition, writes merely "FIRST PUBLISHED 1900", followed by various dates for subsequent 'impressions'. Burnet, however, refers, (1920) 132, to the publication of 1905 (for the *Sophist*) as his second "edition", as well he might, for the printing of 1905 is no mere reprinting, nor even a corrected reprint, but takes account of fresh information that had been made available on the Venice manuscript (T = codex Venetus, Appendix, Classis IV, cod. 1). On this same point, see O'Brien, (1993) 20.

³⁰² Burnet's 4th edition is a corrected reprint of the 3rd edition (1920). The first and second editions were published respectively in 1892 and in 1908.

³⁰³ For the spelling of the reviewer's name adopted here, see the footnote attached to the entry on Robin and Moreau.

³⁰⁴ A corrected reprint of this volume ("*deuxième tirage revu*") appeared in 1948, with the title given in a different form. There was also published, in 1958, a "*troisième tirage avec une conclusion nouvelle*".

- Denniston, J. D. (1966) *The Greek Particles*, 2nd edition, "with corrections" (Oxford).³⁰⁶
- Diels, H. (1882) *Commentaria in Aristotelem Graeca*, vol. ix, *Simplicii in Aristotelis Physicorum Libros Quattuor Priores Commentaria* (Berolini).
- (1922) *Die Fragmente der Vorsokratiker, Griechisch und Deutsch*, Band i, 4th edition (Berlin).³⁰⁷
- Diels, H. and Kranz, W. (1934) *Die Fragmente der Vorsokratiker, Griechisch und Deutsch*, Band i, 5th edition (Berlin).³⁰⁸
- Duke, E. A., and others (1995) *Platonis Opera Recognoverunt Brevique Anotatione Critica Instruxerunt*, in the *Scriptorum Classicorum Bibliotheca Oxoniensis*, tomus i, *Tetralogias I-II Continens* (Oxonii).
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- Fränkel, H. (1946) Review of Verdenius, *Parmenides, Some Comments on his Poem*, in *Classical Philology* 41: 168-71.
- (1962) *Dichtung und Philosophie des Frühen Griechentums, Eine Geschichte der Griechischen Epik, Lyrik und Prosa bis zur Mitte des Fünften Jahrhunderts*, 2nd, revised edition (München).³⁰⁹
- Frede, M. (1967) *Prädikation und Existenzaussage, Platons Gebrauch von "...Ist ..." und "...Ist Nicht ..." im 'Sophistes'* (Göttingen).
- Fritz, K. von (1943) 'Νόος and Νοεῖν in the Homeric Poems', *Classical Philology* 38: 79-93.
- (1945) 'Νοῦς, Νοεῖν, and their Derivatives in Pre-Socratic Philosophy (Excluding Anaxagoras), Part I: From the Beginnings to Parmenides', *Classical Philology* 40: 223-42.
- (1946) 'Νοῦς, Νοεῖν, and their Derivatives in Pre-Socratic Philosophy (Excluding Anaxagoras), Part II: The Post- Parmenidean Period', *Classical Philology* 41: 12-34.
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- Gomperz, T. (1896-1909) *Griechische Denker, Eine Geschichte der Antiken Philosophie*, 3 vols (Leipzig).³¹¹
- Guthrie, W. K. C. (1962-1981) *A History of Greek Philosophy*, 6 vols (Cambridge).

³⁰⁵ The original of this work, in German, entitled *Das Verbum der griechischen Sprache seinem Baue nach dargestellt*, was published in two volumes in Leipzig, in 1873 (vol. i) and in 1876 (vol. ii). The English translation has been made from the second edition of volume one, published under the same title in Leipzig, in 1877, and includes corrections and additions prepared for the second edition of volume two, published in Leipzig, in 1880. I regret that I do not have to hand the second German edition (which is why I quote from the English translation).

³⁰⁶ The first edition of Denniston's invaluable work was published in 1934, and a second, revised edition was published in 1954.

³⁰⁷ The first edition was published in Berlin, in 1903, in one volume. The second and third editions, each in three volumes, were published in 1903 and in 1906 respectively. The fourth edition, quoted here, also in three volumes, is described as an "*Abdruck der dritten mit Nachträgen*".

³⁰⁸ Published in three volumes, 1934-7. The pagination and the numbering of the entries are unchanged in the many later reprintings of this work (some of which are accompanied by various cumulative *Nachträge*).

³⁰⁹ This work was first published in 1951, in New York, under the title *Dichtung und Philosophie des frühen Griechentums, eine Geschichte der griechischen Literatur von Homer bis Pindar*.

³¹⁰ Goodwin's invaluable work was first published in Cambridge, Massachusetts, in 1860, and ran through seemingly innumerable revisions and reprintings before reaching a final form in the edition which I have quoted.

³¹¹ Gomperz's *History* was published in fascicules from 1893 onwards. I quote only the first full edition. There were several later editions of the various volumes. At one stage volume three is described, very curiously, as being both a first and a second edition ("*erste und zweite Auflage*", 1909).

- (1965) *A History of Greek Philosophy*, vol. ii, *The Presocratic Tradition from Parmenides to Democritus* (Cambridge).
- Hardie, R. P. and Gaye, R. K. (1930) *The Works of Aristotle Translated into English*, ed. W. D. Ross, vol. ii, 'Physica' (Oxford).
- Heindorf, L. F. (1810) *Platonis Dialogi Tres, 'Phaedo', 'Sophistes', 'Protagoras', Emendavit et Annotatione Instruxit Lud. Frid. Heindorfius* (Berolini).³¹²
- Joseph, H. W. B. (1916) *An Introduction to Logic*, "Second edition, revised" (Oxford).³¹³
- Kahn, C. H. (1968/1969) 'The Thesis of Parmenides', *Review of Metaphysics* 22: 700-24.
- Karsten, S. (1835) *Philosophorum Graecorum Veterum Praesertim Qui Ante Platonem Floruerunt Operum Reliquiae*, volumen primum, pars altera, *Parmenidis Eleatae Carminis Reliquiae, De Vita Ejus et Studiis Disseruit, Fragmenta Explicuit, Philosophiam Illustravit* (Amstelodami).
- King, J. E. and Cookson, C. (1888) *The Principles of Sound and Inflection as Illustrated in the Greek and Latin Languages* (Oxford).
- Kittel, G. (1933-1979) *Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament*, 10 vols (vol. x in two parts) (Stuttgart/Berlin/Köln/Mainz).³¹⁴
- Lamb, W. R. M. (1924) *Plato, With an English Translation*, in the *Loeb Classical Library*, vol. iv, 'Laches', 'Protagoras', 'Meno', 'Euthydemus' (London/New York).
- Leaf, W. (1886) *The 'Iliad', Edited with English Notes and Introduction*, vol. i, *Books I.—XII.* (London).
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- (1900) *The 'Iliad', Edited, with Apparatus Criticus, Prolegomena, Notes, and Appendices*, vol. i, *Books I—XII*, 2nd edition (London/New York).
- (1902) *The 'Iliad', Edited, with Apparatus Criticus, Prolegomena, Notes, and Appendices*, vol. ii, *Books XIII—XXIV*, 2nd edition (London/New York).
- Leaf, W. and Bayfield, M. A. (1931) *The 'Iliad' of Homer, Edited with General and Grammatical Introductions, Notes, and Appendices*, vol. i (*Books I—XII*) (London).
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- Levet, M. J./Burnyeat, M. (1990) Myles Burnyeat, *The 'Theaetetus' of Plato, With a Translation of Plato's 'Theaetetus' by M. J. Levet, Revised by Myles Burnyeat* (Indianapolis).
- L. S. J. (1940) Liddell, H. G., Scott, R., Jones, H. S., *A Greek-English Lexicon*, 9th edition (Oxford).³¹⁶
- Lyons, J. (1963) *Structural Semantics, An Analysis of Part of the Vocabulary of Plato* (Oxford).
- McCabe, M. M. (1994) *Plato's Individuals* (Princeton).

³¹² The *Phaedo* was also published with a separate title page: *Platonis 'Phaedo', scholarum in usum seorsum cum annotatione perpetua edidit L. F. Heindorfius*, 1810. The same dialogue was also issued a year earlier, with the title page, *Platonis dialogi selecti, cura Lud. Frid. Heindorfii, voluminis IV pars prior continens 'Phaedonem'*, 1809. Logically, therefore, the *Sophist* and *Protagoras* should be counted as *voluminis IV, pars posterior*, but I have not come across a title page made up in this style.

³¹³ The first edition was published in Oxford, 1906.

³¹⁴ I do not have to hand the later, English edition of this work, published from 1964 onwards (Grand Rapids, Michigan), under the title *Theological dictionary of the New Testament*.

³¹⁵ This work has been reprinted, with the same pagination but with additional preliminary matter, by the University of Glasgow Press, in 1977.

³¹⁶ I have not had occasion to quote either the *Supplement* (1968) or the *Revised Supplement* (1996). Although there is, so far (cf. Adrados, 1991), no better dictionary of ancient Greek, the deficiencies in Liddell-Scott-Jones are nonetheless far from negligible. See J. Chadwick, 'The case for replacing Liddell and Scott', *Bulletin of the Institute of Classical Studies* 39 n.s. vol. 1 (1994) 1-11. Chadwick's article should be required reading for any regular users of L. S. J. There is however one extraordinary omission in Chadwick's article. In the opening paragraph he quotes, as lexicographical models, the *Oxford English Dictionary* and Littré. Has he not heard of the *Trésor de la langue française, Dictionnaire de la langue du XIX^e et du XX^e siècle (1789-1960)*, published in 16 tomes (Paris, 1971-94)? The *Trésor* may lack the charm of Littré, but, from a scholarly point of view, it is incomparably superior.

- McDowell, J. (1973) *Plato, 'Theaetetus', Translated with Notes* (Oxford).
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- (1991) 'Platon et Plotin sur la Doctrine des Parties de l'Autre', *Revue Philosophique de la France et de l'Étranger*, 116^e année, tome 181: 501-512.
- (1993) 'Non-being in Parmenides, Plato and Plotinus: A Prospectus for the Study of Ancient Greek Philosophy', in *Modern Thinkers and Ancient Thinkers, The Stanley Victor Keeling Memorial Lectures at University College London, 1981-1991*, ed. R. W. Sharples (London) 1-26.³¹⁸
- (1995) *Le Non-Être, Deux Études sur le 'Sophiste' de Platon* (Sankt-Augustin).
- (1997) 'Immortal and Necessary Being in Plato and Plotinus', in *The Perennial Tradition of Neoplatonism*, ed. J. J. Cleary (Leuven) 39-103.
- O'Brien, D. and Frère, J. (1987) *Études sur Parménide, "sous la direction de Pierre Aubenque"*, tome i, *Le Poème de Parménide, Texte, Traduction, Essai Critique "en collaboration avec Jean Frère pour la traduction française"* (Paris).
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- Owen, G. E. L. (1960) 'Eleatic Questions', *Classical Quarterly* n. s. 10: 84-102.
- (1975) 'Eleatic Questions', reprinted in *Studies in Presocratic Philosophy*, ed. D. J. Furley and R. E. Allen, vol. ii (London) 48-81.
- (1986) 'Eleatic Questions', reprinted in *Logic, Science and Dialectic, Collected Papers in Greek Philosophy*, ed. M. Nussbaum (London) 3-26.
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- Robin, L. (1948) *La Pensée Grecque et les Origines de l'Esprit Scientifique, "édition revue et corrigée avec une Bibliographie méthodique nouvelle"* (Paris).³¹⁹

³¹⁷ Monro's first edition was published in 1882.

³¹⁸ When I received proofs of this article, I discovered that the editor of the volume had excised great swathes of material from my original text without so much as a by-your-leave. Readers may like to be reassured that, despite the same editor's persistent efforts to publish the lecture, without my permission, in a heavily censored form (on the grounds that otherwise he risked being sued for libel), nonetheless the published text is a faithful transcription of the lecture as delivered, and as originally annotated, with only one word changed, and that at the suggestion of the generous American benefactor of the Keeling Lectures.

³¹⁹ Robin's work appeared in various guises subsequently to its first publication in 1923. I have quoted the edition published in the year following Robin's death. In this edition the *Bibliographie méthodique nouvelle* had been prepared by Robin himself; see the note on p. 457, signed by H[enri] B[err]. There were two further posthumous editions, published in 1963 and in

- Robin, L. and Moreau, J. (1950) *Platon, Œuvres Complètes*, vol. ii, *Traduction Nouvelle et Notes par Léon Robin avec la Collaboration de M.-J. [sic] Moreau*, in the *Bibliothèque de la Pléiade* (Paris).³²⁰
- Ryle, G. (1949) *The Concept of Mind* (London).
- Schleiermacher, F. (1807) *Platons Werke*, "Zweiten Theiles Zweiter Band" (Berlin).
- Schwyzler, E. and Debrunner, A. (1959) E. Schwyzler, *Griechische Grammatik*, Band ii, *Syntax und Syntactische Stilistik*, " vervollständigt und herausgegeben von Albert Debrunner", "Zweite, unveränderte Auflage" (München).³²¹
- Smyth, H. W. (1956) *Greek Grammar*, "revised by Gordon M. Messing" (Cambridge, Massachusetts).³²²
- Sprague, R. Kent (1965) *Plato 'Euthydemus'*, *Translated, with an Introduction* (Indianapolis).³²³
- (1972) *The Older Sophists*, Edited by Rosamond Kent Sprague, *A Complete Translation by Several Hands of the Fragments in 'Die Fragmente der Vorsokratiker'...* With a New Edition of 'Antiphon' and of 'Euthydemus' (Columbia, South Carolina).

1973, both of them claiming to be a *nouvelle édition* and to provide fresh bibliographical material.

³²⁰ I give the copyright date printed on the *verso* of the title page of the volume open before me. The second volume of this work was in fact first published in 1942, and has been re-issued a number of times since, with various changes in format and pagination which it is not always easy to keep track of. My *sic* placed between square brackets is intended to indicate that there is a misprint on current issues of the title page: the hyphen added to one of the two translators' names is a mistake. M.-J. Moreau is in fact Monsieur J. Moreau. The hyphen has been added by a printer who misread M. J. Moreau, printed without a hyphen on the title page of earlier publications of the same volume.—In daring to point out this error, I risk calling down on my head the renewed wrath of a French reviewer of my study of the *Sophist*, who assures readers of *Les études philosophiques* that the error which I had pointed out, with the same discretion (then as now, no more than a mild *sic*, placed between square brackets), in the Bibliography to that volume, is of no intrinsic importance, and even that "il semble maladroit d'en aviser un lecteur qui n'y peut mais, et ne saurait faire son profit d'un détail aussi insignifiant". See Castel-Bouchouchi (1998) 421-2. But the truth is that that seemingly trivial error, from a bibliographical point of view, is not trivial at all. For example, in the *General catalogue of printed books* published by the Trustees of the British Museum (one of the largest catalogues of printed books in the world, and on the whole the most reliable), the anxious reader will find many entries devoted to "MOREAU (Joseph) Agrégé de Philosophie, Docteur ès Lettres", but it is only if he lets his eye skip ahead over several other authors' names, that he will eventually light upon the much more modest rubric "MOREAU (M. J.) Translator" (see the *General catalogue of printed books, Five-year supplement 1971-1975*, vol. 9, col. 628). Even then our hapless reader will have no means of knowing, as the compilers of the *Catalogue* obviously themselves did not know, that those two names belong to one and the same individual. A further danger lurks in the catalogue of the National Library of Congress in Washington (the largest catalogue of printed books in the world). For there the reader will have to turn a blind eye (or perhaps I should say a deaf ear) to someone who really was called Moreau, M.-J., author of a dissertation entitled *Considérations générales sur les dyspepsies, des formes flatulente et acide en particulier* (see the *National union catalog pre-1956 imprints*, vol. 394, p. 314), but who was not the same person as our Monsieur Joseph Moreau. Nor are those the only obstacles on the path to the seeker after truth... But the final irony is that my critic has now been victim of a similar error. For the Presses Universitaires de France have succeeded in mis-pelling Mme Castel-Bouchouchi's own name. In the signature placed at the end of her review of my study of the *Sophist*, listed earlier in this Bibliography, there is an intrusive *s*, so that Castel-Bouchouchi there becomes Castel-Bouchouchis. Dare one hope that Mme Castel-Bouchouchi will perhaps feel differently, now that she has herself been victim of an error that she had hitherto thought *insignifiante*?

³²¹ Schwyzler's *Grammar* was originally published in three volumes, München, 1934-53.

³²² The first edition was published in 1920, in New York.

³²³ I quote from the version reprinted "with updated bibliography", Indianapolis, 1993.

- Stobart, J. C. (1911) *The Glory That Was Greece, A Survey of Hellenic Culture and Civilisation* (London).³²⁴
- (1912) *The Grandeur That Was Rome, A Survey of Roman Culture and Civilisation* (London).³²⁵
- Strawson, P. F. (1959) *Individuals, An Essay in Descriptive Metaphysics* (London).
- Tarán, L. (1977) Review of Mourelatos, *The Route of Parmenides*, in *Gnomon* 49: 651-66.
- Veitch, W. (1887) *Greek Verbs Irregular and Defective, Their Forms Meaning and Quantity, Embracing All the Tenses Used by the Greek Writers, With References to the Passages in Which They are Found*, "new edition" (Oxford).³²⁶
- White, N. P. (1993) *Plato, 'Sophist', Translated, With Introduction and Notes* (Indianapolis).
- Wyse, W. and Adcock, F. E. (1931) *Law*, in *A Companion to Greek Studies*, ed. L. Whibley. "Fourth edition, revised" (Cambridge) 464-90.³²⁷
- Zeller, E. (1844) *Die Philosophie der Griechen, Eine Untersuchung über Charakter, Gang und Hauptmomente ihrer Entwicklung*. (Leipzig).
- (1919-1920) *Die Philosophie der Griechen in ihrer geschichtlichen Entwicklung*, ed. W. Nestle, 3 Teile, 6 Abteilungen (Leipzig).

³²⁴ I quote only the first edition. The work ran to a fourth edition, London, 1964.

³²⁵ Again, I quote only the first edition. The work ran to a fourth edition, London, 1961.

³²⁶ The first edition of the work was published in 1848 in Edinburgh. There followed numerous editions and reprintings (four are listed in the *General catalogue of printed books* of the British Museum; no less than seven in the *National union catalog* of the National Library of Congress in Washington), and there was apparently an edition, not listed in either catalogue, which Veitch himself disowned. See Curtius, (1880) [6] n. 1. Without having personally examined these various printings, I cannot give a number to the publication of 1887, which the publishers, no doubt prudently, describe merely as a "new edition".

³²⁷ The first edition of the *Companion* was published in 1905. Second and third editions appeared in 1906 and in 1916.

CHAPTER THREE

TIMAEUS, LOGICIAN AND PHILOSOPHER OF NATURE

DAVID T. RUNIA

If a connoisseur of Plato's writings were to make acquaintance with his cosmological dialogue, the *Timaeus*, for the first time and started reading at the beginning of the scroll, he would at first have encountered nothing out of the ordinary. Admittedly, the opening words referring to a missing person are somewhat enigmatic, but thereafter the regular method of the direct dialogue which Plato uses in the second half of his career appears to be followed. Polite conversation is embarked upon, the discussion of the previous day is briefly alluded to, participants in today's conversation are introduced, a story about events that happened two generations ago is told at some length. Our reader would then have reached the passage in which Critias introduces the main theme of the dialogue, the nature of the universe, on which one of interlocutors, Timaeus of Locri, is an expert (27A). The main speaker takes his cue and commences his account, a *logos* that will occupy the remainder of the dialogue (27C-92C). At this point, effectively, the dialogue stops being a conversation and turns into a lengthy monologue. At the end of the work Plato does not even include a response to Timaeus' speech on the part of his conversation partners.¹ He prefers to end with an elaborate doxology to the cosmos. Surely our imaginary reader would have been most surprised at the way the dialogue unfolded.

Timaeus' long *logos* only has a single break, at 29D4-6 when Socrates describes the account so far as a 'prelude' (προοίμιον), and encourages him to proceed. For this reason the introductory section, 27C1-29D3, is generally referred to as the *proæmium* of Timaeus' account.² As I have argued elsewhere,³ by organizing his *logos* in this way, Plato is deliberately placing himself in the tradition of the Presocratic *On nature* (Περὶ φύσεως) literature. The aim of the *proæmium* is to introduce the subject of the account and the kind of discourse that can be given on it. But—as far as we can tell from

¹ Some rather stilted words, picking up the invocation of the gods in 27C are included at the beginning of the work's unfinished sequel, the *Critias* (106A-107B).

² It is useful to distinguish, as for instance Proclus does insufficiently clearly in his commentary, between the *prologue* of the work (17A-27C) and the *proæmium* of Timaeus' *logos* (27C-29D).

³ 'The Literary and Philosophical Status of Timaeus' *Prooemium*', in T. Calvo and L. Brisson (edd.), *Interpreting the Timaeus-Critias, Proceedings of the IV Symposium Platonicum Selected Papers*, International Plato Studies 9 (Sankt Augustin 1997) 101-118.

available evidence—Plato differs from earlier writers in that he also includes philosophical argument in his prelude, namely an extremely concise attempt to determine the ontological status of the cosmos as the object of the account's inquiry (27D5-29B1). This brief section falls into three parts. Firstly Timaeus *sets out* three fundamental philosophical principles (27D5-28B2). These are affirmed, not argued for.⁴ Then the cosmos, or whatever term one wishes to use for the totality of physical existence, is *introduced* as object of inquiry (28B2-5). Thirdly the three fundamental principles are *applied* to the cosmos (28B5-29B1). Not only can the ontological status of the cosmos be determined on the basis of the conclusions reached, but it is also possible to reflect on what the consequences are for the account as a whole (see esp. 29B3-C7).

Argument cannot take place without a logical basis. Timaeus makes use of logic firstly in order to set out his philosophical principles, and thereafter to apply these to the specific case of the universe. In a ground-breaking and highly stimulating article, the German scholar Theodor Ebert has recently subjected Timaeus' argumentation to a rigorous examination.⁵ His results are not very flattering for the author, or at least so it seems. Timaeus is 'alles andere als ein guter Logiker'.⁶ Moreover the Locrian introduces a real mistake into his argumentation (*Argumentationsfehler*) which he tries artfully to conceal, but in fact undermines his revolutionary thesis that a creator-god was responsible for the universe's coming into being.⁷ But how can this be? It is surely unlikely that Plato, himself a master of dialectical argument, who moreover encouraged fellow-philosophers to formalize logic for the first time in the Academy, would commit such infelicities or even errors unwittingly. Ebert concludes his article by suggesting that we should consider returning to the position defended by Taylor long ago, namely that Timaeus is exactly what he is presented as being, a fifth-century Pythagorean philosopher of nature, and *not* a mouthpiece for Plato's own views.⁸

For more than half a century the eminent scholar to whom this volume is dedicated has shown a passionate interest both in the systematics of Plato's philosophy and in every conceivable aspect of ancient and medieval logic. I trust, therefore that he will also be interested in these brief remarks on the logic and purpose of Timaeus' arguments from a younger scholar, who in

⁴ They are best taken as examples of the Platonic method of hypothesis, put forward as starting-point or foundation for a dialectical exercise; cf. Runia, *art. cit.* 111ff.

⁵ 'Von der Weltursache zum Weltbaumeister: Bemerkungen zu einem Argumentationsfehler im platonischen Timaios', *Antike und Abendland* 37 (1991) 43-54.

⁶ *Ibid.* 51.

⁷ *Ibid.* 52.

⁸ *Ibid.* 54: 'Ist der Timaios also doch nicht einfach identisch mit Plato's Cosmology' (final words of the article). This is a pointed reference to the commentary of F. M. Cornford, *Plato's Cosmology: the Timaeus of Plato translated with a Running Commentary* (London 1937), written with the express purpose of refuting the main thesis of the earlier study, A. E. Taylor, *A Commentary on Plato's Timaeus* (Oxford 1928).

more than one respect stands in his shadow, and is all the more delighted to have this opportunity to honour him. In discussing these arguments, I will at first bracket the question of the relation between Timaeus and his 'creator' Plato.⁹ This can be easily achieved by provisionally regarding Timaeus as the author of the arguments he presents. I shall first look briefly at two arguments in which Timaeus appears to perform rather creditably. Then the features of the argumentation to which Ebert objects will be examined. The aim is not, of course, to defend Plato at all costs, in the spirit of Neoplatonist commentators with an *a priori* commitment to the truth of his doctrines. It is also hardly worthwhile to engage in an extended discussion with the views of a fellow-scholar for its own sake. Rather we should bear in mind the issue that is at stake. The suggestion that we should deprive ourselves of a Platonic cosmology, if warranted, has huge consequences for Platonic studies. It is important to know whether it has any justification.

Should we, then, conclude with Ebert that Timaeus is at best a mediocre logician? There are at least two reasons for affirming that such a negative qualification is *not* called for.

In the first place it is to be agreed that the first argument on the ontological status of the cosmos is basically sound from a logical point of view. This argument is based on the first fundamental philosophical principle, the celebrated division into being and becoming (27D6-8A1). Timaeus presents the division in terms of a question which places two classes side by side: what (is) A *and* what (is) B? The answer relates ontology to epistemology: class A as being (*on*) is characterized by knowability, through intuitive knowledge (*noêsis*) together with discursive reasoning (*logos*), whereas class B as becoming (*genesis*) is the object of opinion (*doxa*) with the help of sense-perceptibility (*aisthêsis*). If, however, the cosmos is to be fitted into this dual scheme, we shall have to consider their extension. Although Timaeus does not indicate this explicitly (as we saw, he joins them with 'and'),¹⁰ it is probable that we are meant to regard the two classes as forming an exclusive dichotomy: an object belongs either in class A or in class B. A clear hint is given in this direction by the formulation of the sentence. Timaeus does not merely ask: 'what (is) A and what (is) B', but more fully: 'what (is) A and not B, and what (is) B and not A'.¹¹

The application of the principle to the cosmos as sum total of physical reality (introduced in 28B2-4) proceeds as follows (28B6-C2):

1. Either (there is) being-cum-knowability or (there is) becoming-cum-sense-perceptibility.

⁹ There is no evidence to suggest that Timaeus is based on a historical figure.

¹⁰ The disjunctive 'or' only occurs in the application to the cosmos, at 28B6.

¹¹ In my comments on this division in *art. cit.* (n. 3) 109 I did not take the logical aspects of the argument sufficiently into account.

2. The cosmos is sense-perceptible.
3. But that which (is) sense-perceptible has come into being (cf. 1.)
4. Therefore the cosmos has come into being.

The argument plainly follows the method of categorial logic, involving the combination of terms.¹² Formally it is unquestionably valid. Ebert regards this validity as dependent on one condition: the relation between the paired terms being and knowability and becoming and sense-perceptibility respectively has to be one of co-extensiveness and not of predication (i.e. $A = B$, not AaB).¹³ Otherwise in his view it would not be justified to apply the first of the terms to the cosmos (conclusion 4.) on the basis of the second one being applicable (premiss 2.). But it seems to me that Plato's argument can hardly be thought vulnerable on this score, for at 28A2-3 he very clearly states that 'what is opinable by opinion with unreasoning sense-perception' *is* becoming and perishing, and never being in the true sense. It is true that we have to supply the copula here. But the direction of the argument is the same as in the later application. There is no reversal of terms as is suggested by Ebert. It may well be that Plato does wish us to conclude the co-extension of the terms. We note that, when Timaeus states the general principle, he avoids using any form of the verb 'to be' to express the identity of the terms involved (hence my use of brackets in premiss 1. above). On the other hand, when he introduces premiss 2., he does state that the cosmos *is* (*estin*) visible and tangible (28B7-8), i.e. he uses the verb 'to be' to express predication. This selective use of the verb 'to be' suggests that Timaeus may be aware of the difference between the two kinds of propositions, the one expressing co-extension, the other a predicative relation.¹⁴ But, it should be noted, this distinction is not required for his argument.

If, however, Timaeus means the relation between becoming and sense-perceptibility to be one of co-extension, another problem may loom. Must it then not be concluded, Ebert suggests, that the heavenly beings, which in Greek thought were generally regarded as immortal and eternal, have to be characterized as belonging to the realm of genesis and destruction?¹⁵ It is

¹² Cf. my comments on its logical form at 'The Language of Excellence in Plato's *Timaeus* and Later Platonism', in S. Gersh and C. Kannengiesser (edd.), *Platonism in Late Antiquity*, Christianity and Judaism in Antiquity 8 (Notre Dame 1992) 24. I suggested that the argument is basically what would later become an Aristotelian categorial syllogism. The fact that the cosmos is a particular is not an objection. Like the sun it represents a class of which there is but a single member. But I did not observe that two of the premisses involve equivalence rather than predication.

¹³ *Art. cit.* (n. 5) 47.

¹⁴ This is the case even if Plato recognizes no proper doctrine of predication as such, as maintained by L. M. de Rijk, *Plato's Sophist: a Philosophical Commentary*, Kon. Ned. Akad. Wet. Verh. Afd. Lett. 133 (Amsterdam 1986) 72-76. It is a matter of *logica utens* as opposed to *logica docens* (see further the text below at p. 118).

¹⁵ *Art. cit.* (n. 5) 47. Note that it is better not to speak of 'das immer Werdende', because the adverb αἰεί at 28A1 is most likely a later addition to the text, as persuasively argued by J.

true, as he points out, that Timaeus later argues that the celestial bodies are in principle subject to destruction, but will not suffer that fate because they will be preserved by the will of the demiurge (41A7-B6). But this is awkward, because it means that the cosmology that will be set out later in the *logos* has to be presumed before the *logos* gets underway. The difficulty is reduced if it is assumed that Timaeus' fundamental principles are the result of an antecedent dialectical exercise.¹⁶ In such an exercise the principle correlating composition with destruction, which Timaeus invokes at 41A7 (τὸ δεθὲν πᾶν λυτόν, all that has been bound is dissoluble), will have been adduced. If an entity is composite, as the heavenly bodies unquestionably are, then it must also possess the characteristics of becoming and perishing. The same will apply to the cosmos in its entirety, though Timaeus does not emphasize the latter trait in the application at 28B6-C2, reserving it for 32C3.

There is in fact a difficulty here that Timaeus almost certainly fails to perceive. His premiss has a flaw in its content, namely in the claim that sense-perceptibility can be predicated of the universe as the sum total of physical reality. As Taylor pointed out long ago with reference to Kant's celebrated first antinomy, sense-perceptibility is a physical characteristic (unlike completeness), and it is highly doubtful that such a characteristic can be predicated of something that *ipso facto* can never be experienced in its totality.¹⁷

A final difficulty that may still be raised in relation to this argument reverts back to the original philosophical principle with which it commences. We noted above that the two alternatives appear to form an exhaustive dichotomy. Indeed this is logically necessary if we are to take Timaeus at his word and equate being with not-becoming and becoming with not-being (27D6-8A1). The difficulty is that Timaeus later emphatically introduces a 'third kind' (*triton genos*), the famous 'receptacle of becoming', and at 52D we get a *triadic* list, being, space and becoming. Does this later refinement not invalidate the earlier apparently exclusive dichotomy?¹⁸ The question is obviously difficult. Possibly the only way to rescue Timaeus' presentation is to argue that the receptacle is not an entity such as the ideas and the sense-perceptible objects are (i.e. resembling Aristotelian substances, but not the same). It is more like space or a substrate for all physical things. The law of the excluded middle would thus not be contravened.¹⁹

Whittaker, 'Timaeus 27d ff.', *Phoenix* 23 (1969) 181-185, reprinted in *Studies in Platonism and Patristic Thought* (London 1984), study II.

¹⁶ As I have argued in the article cited above in n. 3-4.

¹⁷ Cf. Taylor, *op. cit.* (n. 8) 69-70; G. Vlastos, 'Creation in the *Timaeus*: is it a Fiction?', in R. E. Allen (ed.), *Studies in Plato's Metaphysics* (London 1964) 403.

¹⁸ Cf. Ebert, *art. cit.* 47, who speaks of the 'Untauglichkeit dieses Argumentes'.

¹⁹ The difficulty becomes particularly acute when Timaeus tries to formulate what kind of cognition we can have of the receptacle. If knowledge and sense-perceptibility are mutually exclusive, how can there be a third way? The suggestion is that it is apprehended 'by a kind of bastard reasoning without sense-perception' (52B2). Once again, the exclusive disjunction 'all

For the second reason that Timaeus should *not* be called a mediocre logician, we need to turn to his third argument. In an article published almost at the same time as that of Ebert, the Canadian scholar T. M. Robinson suggested that in the application of the third principle to the cosmos Timaeus may have unwittingly committed the logical fallacy of affirming the consequent.²⁰ The principle, which follows on from the first two (hence the connective 'thus' (*oun*, 28A6), takes the form of a double conditional.

1. If the artificer looks to a model that is unchanging (i.e. belonging to being), the resultant product will be beautiful; if he looks to a model that is subject to becoming, the product will not be beautiful.

Either of these conditionals can be used as the first premiss of a propositional syllogism of the *modus ponens* type.²¹ Taking the first, we might expect the following argument:

2. The model used is in fact unchanging.
3. Therefore the cosmos as resultant product is beautiful.

But this is *not* the way that Timaeus applies the principle to the cosmos in 28C5-29B1. Instead he reverses the formulation of the principle given previously (29A2-4):

- 1a. If the cosmos is beautiful and the artificer is good, then he looked to the unchanging model; if not,²² then he looked to the model subject to becoming.

The argument then proceeds (29A4-6):

- 2a. The cosmos is in fact most beautiful and its artificer is excellent.
- 3a. Therefore the artificer looked to the unchanging model.

If this argument is combined with the principle as originally enunciated, Robinson argued, it must conclude that Timaeus, perhaps unwittingly, commits the fallacy of affirming the consequent, i.e.

- 1b. If the artificer uses what is unchanging as model, the product will be beautiful.
- 2b. The product is in fact beautiful.
- 3b. Therefore he did use what is unchanging as model.

The fallacy is obvious from the following example, which our honorand, as former Leidenaar, will surely appreciate:

- 1c. If it rains, the pavement is wet.
- 2c. The pavement is in fact wet.
- 3c. Therefore it has rained.

things are either known or perceived' can be avoided if the third kind is not a thing. But at 52D3 we do read that being and space and genesis exist (*einai*), forming a triad (*tria*).

²⁰ 'The World as Art-Object: Science and the Real in Plato's *Timaeus*', *Illinois Classical Studies* 18 (1993) 105.

²¹ As I pointed out in my article cited above (n. 12) 24.

²² Timaeus does not spell the alternative out, i.e. that the cosmos is not beautiful and the artificer is not good. Both the cosmos and its maker are gods, so this statement would involve him in blasphemy (*ὁ μὴ δ' εἰπεῖν τι θεῷ*, 29A4).

Quod non, of course, since someone might have just washed his car, or any number of other possibilities.

The situation does not look good for Timaeus the logician. But appearances may deceive. In his article Ebert with admirable acuteness had already prior to the publication of Robinson's article demonstrated that Timaeus is in fact entirely justified in reversing the direction of the conditional proposition in his principle and thereby affirming what was the consequent in the original formulation.²³ The reason he can do this is that the terms used in the principle are contradictories. This is certainly the case with the terms beautiful and not beautiful, for Timaeus explicitly says so (*kalon* 28A8 & *kalos* 29A2, *ou kalon* 28B2 & implied at 29A4). In the light of our earlier discussion, it may be also be granted for the pair what is unchanging (i.e. being) and becoming.²⁴ This means that the two conditionals in fact form a dilemma.

Since this is the case, the argument can be presented in the form *tollendo tollens*, as in the following example:

- 1d. If it rains, the pavement is wet.
- 2d. The pavement is in fact not wet.
- 3d. Therefore it has not rained.

Unlike the earlier example, this argument is valid. We follow the same example in the case of Timaeus' argument, starting off now from the second horn of the dilemma:

- 1e. If the artificer uses becoming (i.e. not-Being) as model, the product will be not-beautiful.
- 2e. The product is in fact not not-beautiful, i.e. it is beautiful.
- 3e. Therefore he did not not-use what is unchanging as model, i.e. he did use it.

It is apparent, therefore, that the argument is valid, even though the consequent is affirmed.

The defence that has been mounted on Timaeus' behalf involves the reconstruction of the logic of his argument. The upshot is that it is sound. We cannot of course be certain that he (i.e. his creator Plato) was aware of its soundness (whether consciously or instinctively), although the principle of charity would encourage us to draw this conclusion. There is, however, another possible reconstruction of his thought that can be put forward. It might be surmised that he regarded the principle that is the starting-point of the argument as involving a double biconditional, i.e.

- 1f. *If and only if* the artificer looks to a model that is unchanging (i.e. belonging to being), will the resultant product be beautiful; *if and only if* he looks to a model that is subject to becoming, will the product not be beautiful.

²³ Ebert, *art. cit.* 50.

²⁴ Or as Ebert says, unchanging and becoming.

Once again, given that the terms of the two conditional statements can be taken to be contradictories, the principle does in fact reduce to a biconditional, though Timaeus does not say so in so many words.²⁵ Biconditional statements involving the combination of necessary and sufficient conditions and allowing a reversal of direction of the argument are a feature of modern logic. In ancient logic the biconditional is recognized by Boethius, and may have been anticipated in Stoic logic.²⁶ Once again it is possible that Timaeus may have intuited this logical characteristic of his principle.

It is also possible, however, that his thought took another turn. The third principle follows on from the earlier principle—to be discussed more fully below—that every product has a cause (28A4-6). ‘Cause’ here is meant in the sense of an efficient cause. Timaeus may have thought in terms of a mono-causal explanation: A must lead to B, and if B occurs, it could only have happened through A.²⁷ One might think of the following example:

1g. If the sun exists, there is sunlight, and if there is sunlight, it is caused (only) by the sun.

Such a mono-causal conditional—equivalent of course to a biconditional—would allow the consequent to be affirmed, parallel to what Timaeus in fact does, i.e.

2g. But there is in fact sunlight

3g. Therefore the sun exists.

The question is, however, whether Timaeus would be justified in making the assumption of a mono-causal relation. Are there no other explanations for the beauty of the cosmos available than that the demiurge used what is unchanging as his model for creation? This question leads us back to our main theme, Timaeus’ performance as a logician and a natural philosopher.

What then, to take the other side of our question, are the grounds for concluding that Timaeus *is* at best a mediocre logician, whose logic should perhaps be dissociated from Plato’s own dialectical skills? Apart from what

²⁵ Curiously Cornford paraphrases the principle as follows, *op. cit.* (n. 8) 21 (my emphasis): ‘The work of any maker will be good *only if* he fashions it after an eternal model...’, i.e. he interprets it in terms of a sufficient condition. But perhaps he had a biconditional in mind.

²⁶ Cf. J. M. Bochenski, *Formale Logik* (Freiburg-München 1961²) 139, 159, adducing Boethius, *De syllogismo hypothetico* PL 64.875A-B. Bochenski and B. Mates, *Stoic Logic* (Berkeley 1961²) 56 argue, adducing a text in Galen, that Boethius may have based this on the Stoic συνυμμένον, but this is vigorously denied by M. Frede, *Die Stoische Logik*, Abh. Akad. Wiss. Gött. phil.-hist. Kl. Dritte folge 38 (Göttingen 1974) 93.

²⁷ In the discussion that ensued after I presented an earlier version of this paper at Trinity College Dublin, John Dillon suggested that the standard Stoic example of a *modus ponens* hypothetical syllogism might be taken in this monocausal sense, i.e. (cf. Sext. Emp. *Adv. log.* II.423): ‘If a woman has milk in her breasts, she has conceived’. But the reverse is not necessarily true, since the milk may have dried up. At Diog. Laert. 7.74 we read about special ‘causal propositions’, but it is emphasized that the antecedent does *not* follow from the conclusion. These propositions are not discussed by Mates or Frede in their studies on Stoic logic.

we have mentioned so far Ebert brings forward three deficiencies in his argumentation.²⁸

Firstly, the formulation of the second principle at 28A4-6—a noteworthy precursor of the Leibnizian principle of sufficient reason²⁹—is problematic:

Now all that comes into being necessarily does so by means of some cause; for it is impossible for anything to possess becoming apart from a cause.

Two problems are noted:³⁰ (1) a principle should not be grounded in a further statement, which undermines its status as principle; (2) the reasoning appears to involve a *petitio principii*, since the grounding statement (impossible that not-p) appears to say the same as the statement it grounds (necessarily that p).

A single response can be given which deals with both difficulties. It is assumed by Ebert that the conjunction 'for' (*gar*), which introduces the second part of the sentence, has a causal force and thus indicates that what follows gives a ground for the preceding statement. This assumption may be questioned. The conjunction is better taken as offering an elucidation, i.e. it basically means 'that is' or 'indeed'.³¹ The modal operator 'necessarily', which here appears for the first time in the *logos*, but will recur repeatedly during its long course (the first example is found only four lines later in 28A), is clarified through the denial of possibility. This means that the first statement is not grounded in the second, but one can take them together as forming the principle. Rhetorical considerations may also have played a role. In contrast to the other two principles, a single simple premiss is in fact all that is required. Through the presentation of two statements which say almost the same thing, the principle obtains more body.

It is also worth mentioning two points raised by Proclus in his long discussion of this difficulty.³² Firstly, even if the two statements virtually amount to the same thing, the one can be clearer or more emphatic than the other (he gives an example of a doctor who can say to his patient either that he must eat the food he is offered or 'if you don't eat this, you cannot possibly stay alive'). Proclus' second explanation takes a different line. When *associating* genesis and its cause, as in the first statement, necessity is appropriate. When *dissociating* the two, as in the second statement, impossibility is more suitable, for genesis taken on its own is utterly lacking in power and perfection. We note that in both cases Proclus looks not only at logical structure, but also speculates on what Timaeus is aiming to convey in

²⁸ See the summary at Ebert, *art. cit.* 53. He speaks of a 'Häufung von Fehlern'.

²⁹ Cf. H.-J. Engfer, Art. 'Principium rationis sufficientis', *Historisches Wörterbuch der Philosophie*, Band VII (Darmstadt 1989) 1325.

³⁰ See Ebert, *art. cit.* 47.

³¹ For the distinction between explanatory and causal *gar*, see H. W. Smyth, *Greek Grammar* (Cambridge MA 1956²) 639. In my translation above I have retained the conventional translation of *gar* as 'for' in order not to prejudge the issue.

³² *In Tim.* 1.258.12-60.19.

terms of contents, i.e. what we might call his larger rhetorical strategy. We will make a similar point in relation to the next problem.

The second point of criticism that Ebert directs at Timaeus' logical performance focuses on his presentation of the third argument, and particularly its relation to the principle on which it is based. There was no need to introduce the discrepancy between the formulation of the principle at the outset (28A6-B2) and its reformulation in reversed terms in the application of the principle to the cosmos (28C5-29A4). Timaeus could have just as easily stated it the right way around the first time (i.e. from nature of product to nature of model). Moreover, there was strictly speaking no justification for him to expand the second formulation of the conditional proposition at 29A2-4 and state not only that the cosmos need be beautiful, but also its maker need be good. This was not expressed in the original formulation and so introduces an unwarranted extra element in the argumentation.

Is this a fair criticism in the direction of Timaeus and his creator? In my view it is not. It presumes too narrow a perspective on the role of the philosophical principles stated in the *proæmium* and the arguments based on them. As was noted at the outset of the article, the purpose of this section is to introduce the theme of the account and the kind of discourse that can be given on it. Plato expands it by also including a certain amount of philosophical argument, which has the purpose of determining the ontological status of the cosmos as object of the account's inquiry. But this does not mean that the other aims are to be neglected. Indeed, because he wishes to keep the prelude as compact as he can (a striking feature of the entire *logos*, which covers a prodigious amount of ground), he combines these various aims, and so kills various birds with a single stone.

The presentation of the fundamental philosophical principles and the arguments based on them therefore not only serves the purpose of teaching us something about the nature of the universe, but also has the task of introducing the reader to key concepts in the account. In the third principle the concepts of both the demiurge and the model are presented for the first time.³³ For this reason, we may surmise, Timaeus puts them up front in his conditional proposition, rather than the product, which, before the cosmos is introduced, has to be stated in entirely general terms. In the argument based on this principle, in contrast, it is the turn of the cosmos to receive the front position. Timaeus takes this liberty—which once again is part of a rhetorical rather than a strictly philosophical strategy—presumably because he is aware that the logic of the passage is sound.

As for the inclusion of a reference to the goodness of the demiurge, it might be argued that it is implicit in the formulation of the third principle: if

³³ The definite article that Timaeus uses at 28A6 might seem a bit surprising. But the article can have a generic force in Greek; cf. Smyth *op. cit.* 287. Cornford's rendering 'the maker of anything' renders the intent well.

the demiurge looks to the everlasting model, this means he possesses knowledge of the forms. It is to be expected that the knowledge of the supreme artificer will not be confined to a limited number of forms, but will extend to their entirety, and will certainly include knowledge of the good, the ἀνυπόθετος ἀρχή (unhypothesized principle) of the *Republic*. If this is required of the guardians of the ideal state, then *a fortiori* it can hardly be lacking in the case of the maker of the entire universe. The reference is also clearly anticipatory, pointing forward to the affirmation of the god's goodness at 29E1, the first theme to be discussed *after the proæmium*.

The third deficiency is, in Ebert's view, by far the most serious. It is described as a 'mistake in argumentation' which undermines the entire thesis of the *logos*.³⁴ It occurs in the application of the second principle to the cosmos in 28C3-5. In actual fact one can hardly speak of an application. The principle is simply reformulated with reference to the object of inquiry. The cosmos as entity that has come into being must, like everything else, have a cause. This cause is then identified with the demiurgic maker of the cosmos. But this apparently involves Timaeus in a culpable move. From the fact, Ebert argues, that the cosmos has a cause, one may not conclude that this cause has to be a 'Weltbaumeister', a technologist on a cosmic scale. A glance at the world of becoming will show that only a small percentage of things are constructed in a process of construction involving a model or a blueprint. Most things are born and grow. In this case there is no model involved. Timaeus first has to show that there is no question of the universe being begotten in the manner of an offspring produced by a biological father, before he can ask his question about which model the demiurge used. The famous statement that the demiurge is difficult to find is meant to conceal Timaeus' mistake in argumentation. But, we might reply, does not Timaeus describe his creator-god as 'father and maker', i.e. he deliberately sets the two modes of biological and technological production side by side? Ebert suggests that Plato maybe issuing a warning to his reader behind the back of his chief speaker, namely that the decision between the two kinds of production has not been adequately made.

A number of responses can be made to the charge against our logician. Firstly, in the above analysis the second principle and its application are treated too much in isolation from the rest. It is correct to say that in the application no real argumentation is given. But it is important to note that the essential move has already occurred earlier, in the transition from the second to the third principle (effected by the conjunction *oun*, 28A). In the second Timaeus speaks only of a cause. In the third he immediately *substitutes* a craftsman or demiurge for this cause. It is part of the principle, thus is not argued for, but rather hypothesized. The step that takes place in the sec-

³⁴ Ebert, *art. cit.* 52.

ond argument at 28C2 ff. is that Timaeus now speaks about the craftsman actually responsible for the production of the cosmos, i.e. not just any craftsman, but one who makes the physical product (consisting of soul and body) which embraces all other physical things.

The choice of the technological metaphor as the one most suitable for explaining the coming into being of the cosmos is thus already made in the third philosophical principle. It is not argued for. It is, however, fully consistent with Plato's doctrine on the question of the structure and design of physical reality. For purposes of comparison the excursus on religion and cosmology written a few years later in Book X of the *Laws* is highly illuminating. The Athenian stranger reports (888D-E) that he has heard of a remarkable doctrine (*thaumastos logos*), namely that all things that come into being (one half of the divided classes in the first principle, we note), do so either 'by nature (*physis*)' or 'by art (*technê*)' or 'by chance (*tychê*)'. If we translate this into the terms of the *Timaeus*, we might be tempted to say: chance or spontaneous generation of the cosmos is denied outright (as emerges later when the works of necessity are introduced), but the alternatives of nature or art might be taken to refer to biological generation or technological production respectively. Must we then not concede that the possibility of natural generation, not involving any kind of external intelligible model, has not been refuted, and so leaves a pernicious hole in Timaeus' argument?

But this is not the way that the *Laws* passage should be read. Nature is in fact coupled with chance (see esp. 889C6), and it is argued that both are quite inadequate for the explanation of the ordered and purposeful structure of the universe. Both the Milesian and the atomist cosmologies are rejected as explanatorily insufficient. The realm of art is commonly regarded as being confined to artefacts which are secondary to the natural materials out of which they are made (889A). But this is quite wrong. *Nous* or intelligence is required for explaining the cosmos' structure, and this is a matter of *technê*, the intelligent and skilful application of reason to unformed material.

Plato's argument, anticipated in some degree by Anaxagoras, was highly influential. Take the case of Aristotle. Of course it is true that Aristotle has no use for the demiurge or for the model he uses. Moreover he attributes the development of purposeful structure in biology to nature, unlike Plato clearly dissociating it from chance and necessity. But even so, the underlying explanatory model used to explain nature's purposeful design is that of the craftsman exercising his *technê*, as compactly formulated in the phrase 'nature operating as a craftsman' (ἡ φύσις δημιουργήσασα, *Part. anim.* I.5.645a9).³⁵ Moreover the role of form in natural reproduction can be seen

³⁵ The difference is that Aristotle removes the aspect of deliberation; cf. F. Solmsen, 'Nature as a craftsman in Greek thought', *JHI* 24 (1963) 488 (= *Kleine Schriften* (Hildesheim 1968)

as an internalization of Plato's model. Famously even the Stoa, for whom cosmobiology is central, still defines nature as fire operating 'artistically' (τεχνικόν), i.e. like a craftsman (Diog. Laert. 7.156). These are no more than metaphors and analogies, but they are no less important for being that, because they reveal the underlying explanatory model. Despite what Aristotle affirms in his *Physics* (II.2.194a21, II.8.199a16), it is not so much art that imitates nature as nature that is being understood in terms of art.

A further aspect to be borne in mind is that in the depiction of the activity of the divine creator in the *Timaeus* itself, the image of a craftsman using an external model is only one of an entire gallery of images.³⁶ Plato's aim is not primarily theological, trying to persuade us of the existence of a creator-god. Rather it is cosmological: he is using this conception or metaphor to explain features of the existent cosmos.³⁷ The majority of the images employed are technological, but some refer to biological processes.³⁸ The image of the demiurge as gardener combines them both (e.g. 41E-42A). The metaphor of a craftsman using a model is given a privileged role precisely because it explains best what Plato wants to explain, the patent role of intelligent design in the structure of the universe. For this reason it is introduced from the outset in the *proæmium* itself. Once again Timaeus is highlighting a fundamental aspect of his argument. It is not postulated because he is a fifth-century Pythagorean (the explanation is in fact much more a fourth-century view), but because Plato himself is convinced of the indispensability of this doctrine.

But, it might be rejoined, should not attention be given to the actual argument? Is it not the case that it does involve a fallacious jump? It has to be conceded to Ebert that a direct inference from cause to craftsman is from a formal viewpoint an invalid move. If Timaeus assumes that there is a mono-causal connection between the cosmos as caused entity and the craftsman as cause, then he is mistaken.³⁹ But is the reasoning itself unsound? This is not necessarily the case. Timaeus may be arguing enthymematically, not from probable premisses, which would be inappropriate in the dialectical context

1.347). For a striking passage in which Aristotle uses artisanal metaphors (builder and potter) to describe the processes of nature see *De gen. anim.* I.22.730b5-32.

³⁶ On the diversity of imagery see esp. L. Brisson, *Le même et l'autre dans la structure ontologique du Timée de Platon* (Paris 1974), esp. 31-50. I disagree, however, with his view that the reference to 'father' is merely a reminiscence of earlier cosmogonies in the mythical and Presocratic traditions.

³⁷ Cf. the interpretation of H. Cherniss, *Aristotle's criticism of Plato and the Academy* (Baltimore 1944, New York 1962³) 607: 'The "cause" of the *Philebus*, called σοφία καὶ νοῦς... is not "god" but a logical abstraction, "intelligent causation" in general; and the demiurge of the *Timaeus* is a personification of this abstraction, a symbol of the class of causes ὅσαι μετὰ νοῦ καλῶν καὶ ἀγαθῶν δημιουργοί (46E4).' I do not agree, however, that the demiurge is only a symbol, and also not that intelligent causation is to be placed exclusively on the level of soul.

³⁸ It is striking how prominent throughout the account is the use of the verb γεννάω, to beget, and related terms, e.g. in the *proæmium* at 28C1 γινόμενα καὶ γεννητά.

³⁹ See above p. 112.

of the *proæmium*, but from signs, i.e. from effect back to cause.⁴⁰ The argument upon which this reasoning is based is precisely the one that I have outlined in the previous paragraphs above. The challenge that Timaeus issues to his listeners (and Plato to his readers) is this: present to me an alternative explanatory model which can account for what it is to be explained, that the universe is what it is, a cosmos. In more general terms one may argue as follows: even if an argument is not valid from the viewpoint of its logical form, it may nevertheless be valid materially.⁴¹ This was certainly Timaeus' conviction, and we may take it to be Plato's as well.

The conclusion of our brief investigation can be stated in straightforward terms. It is two-fold. As a logician Timaeus puts up a creditable performance. His main arguments are valid, and make use of procedures which will later be formalized in Greek logic. The brief passage that we have examined is a fine example of *logica utens*, preceding the *logica docens* that is developed after Plato's time (and is assumed by a commentator such as Proclus).⁴² It is utterly implausible that Plato should be deliberately sowing seeds of doubt in the reader which might induce him or her to conclude that the author is distancing himself from his spokesman. But logic only plays a limited role in the *proæmium* as a whole. This introductory section has a broader function. It must also introduce the subject of the logos as a whole, and this entails that it must make reference to central themes of the natural philosophy that is to follow. The most basic philosophical assumptions of the account, however, are already encapsulated in the formulation of the three fundamental principles with which Timaeus starts off. These are metaphysical principles of Plato's own philosophy as it developed in his maturity. Anterior to Timaeus, both as logician and natural philosopher, is Plato the dialectician.⁴³

⁴⁰ Once again this need not taken as an empirical point, i.e. presuming the results of the enquiry that is being introduced. It flows from the identification of the object of enquiry with the cosmos (28B2).

⁴¹ I owe this point to my colleague Göran Sundholm. As an example he gives the argument A is bachelor, therefore A is unmarried. This argument is logically invalid (A is P, therefore A is Q), but materially sound.

⁴² For this (medieval) distinction see S. Ebbesen, Art. 'Logica docens/utens', *HWP* 5 (1980) 355-357.

⁴³ An earlier version of this article was given as a paper to The Centre for the Study of the Platonic Tradition, Dublin, Ireland, and to the Plato group of the Dutch Classical Research School (oikos). I would like to thank all my colleagues, but esp. John Dillon and Job van Eck, for their valuable comments. I extend a special vote of thanks to my Leiden colleague Göran Sundholm for considerable help and guidance on the more specialized logical aspects of my theme. He too wishes to congratulate the honorand, who warmly welcomed him to Leiden more than a decade ago. For all shortcomings that remain I take sole responsibility.

CHAPTER FOUR
MAKING ROOM FOR FAITH: IS PLATO?

JOHANNES M. VAN OPHUIJSEN

I therefore had to annul knowing, in order to get room for believing
(*Ich musste also das Wissen aufheben, um zum Glauben Platz zu bekommen*).
Immanuel KANT, *Critique of Pure Reason*, B xxx

pistis is of course not “faith” in Plato, but Neoplatonists, Christians, and
commentators have confused the two ideas hopelessly.
Paul SHOREY on *Republic* VI,511E, Loeb edition

1. Making room for faith

In the programmatic statement by which Kant clarifies the project of the first *Critique* in the Preface to its second edition, *Glaube(n)* doubtless covers more beliefs than just those of ‘faith’, but it has at least to include these. Making room for these had been on the early modern agenda at least since Descartes drove his wedge between faith and reason by claiming that ‘the revealed truths ... are beyond our understanding’;¹ but one might expect it to have already been a problem for Platonising Christians, or Christianising Platonists, confronted on the one hand with the primacy of faith (*pistis*) in the New Testament, on the other hand with Plato’s apparent depreciation of *pistis* in the *Republic*. If we suppose that Shorey’s sharp distinction between the two notions of *pistis* involved is valid without qualification, then precisely to the extent that it helps us with Plato it cannot help us in understanding a large part of the Platonic tradition; it requires at least a supplementary answer to the question how a Christian reader could have known, or why he would have assumed, that Plato meant by *pistis* something radically different from faith.

One approach to this question is to trace the reception of Platonic doctrine through individual philosophers, theologians and commentators. An illuminating study of this kind on Clement of Alexandria will be found in Lilla (1971).² A related or complementary approach could be to consider the ordinary language background of the term, looking for antecedents of Christian notions of faith in pagan, especially pre-Platonic, Greek literature,

¹ *les vérités révélées ... sont au-dessus de notre intelligence.* (*Discours* pt. 1, p. 8 A-T)

² Esp. III. *pistis*, *gnosis*, cosmology & theology, 1. The doctrine of *Pistis*, pp. 118–42.

as well as in Hebrew scripture and the Septuagint version. This line is exemplified by Lindsay (1993) on Josephus.³

In what follows I will not be concerned with how later antiquity read Plato or any other pre-Christian author, nor, with one exception, with the relation of Plato's terminology to previous usage or with the evolution of his own conceptual apparatus: I will not enter upon the history of concepts or doctrine or of their actual reception. Instead I shall review statements *on* and statements *applying* the notion of *pistis* and a few related notions in Plato's own works with a view to what might be called their possible reception, i.e. in order to find out to what extent they might be open to or even provoke a reading assimilating them to a religious notion of faith. I hope to show that Plato does indeed expose himself to such interpretations owing to a certain ambivalence and tension within his own conception of *pistis*.

2. Trust and her sisters: belief states ranked

The most familiar contexts of the term *pistis* in Plato are the ones in the *Republic*, where the belief state of *pistis* is associated with *doxa* or 'what is held to be so', as distinct from what is known to be so. This distinction of meaning is more often than not exploited so as to have *doxa* refer to what is *merely* held to be so, what is only apparently so, as opposed to what is really and truly so; and this connotation determines how low *pistis* is rated compared to several other cognitive dispositions. The first instance of *pistis* in the *Republic* establishes this link with *doxa*, but leaves the status of *pistis* undefined:

(1) *Rep.* VI,505E2⁴

(505D5) S.: But what of this? Isn't this clear, that many would choose (to do and possess and be held to <do and possess>) things that are estimated (*dokounta*) to be just or fine, but no one is content to acquire things that are <merely> estimated to be good; on the contrary, they seek those which really are (*onta*) good: here if anywhere everyone depreciates estimate (*atimazei doxan*).⁵

Adeim.: Quite so.

³ Esp. pp. 7–20.

⁴ Translations are my own. They are unidiomatic, making no concessions to either usage or tradition as far as the terminology under discussion is concerned; deliberately so, since the object is precisely to retrieve what these terms could have expressed to a first audience unaccustomed to look at them through overlays accruing to them by transmission from teacher to student over dozens of generations. For *pistis* I vary between translations as they suit the context, in order to bring out different potential connotations. If one equivalent is required, then of English vocabulary as basic as *pistis* is in Greek, 'trust' catches more of these connotations than 'faith' does, and 'faith' more than 'belief' does.

⁵ Usually translated 'opinion' when attributed to the knowing subject, and 'appearance' when attributed to the object known. I use 'estimate' both because it is conveniently ambivalent or neutral between these two applications and because it comes with a verb that, unlike 'opine', is not overly stilted and, unlike 'appear', has an active and a passive voice neatly corresponding to *dokein* in its 'subjective' and its 'objective' use. Cf. on (4) below.

S.: Now that which every soul pursues, and which it does everything *for*, divining that it *is* something, but at a loss and unable to grasp adequately just what it is or even to go by a durable conviction / confidence (*pistei khrēsasthai monimōi*) such as it does with respect to other things, due to which it fails to reach whatever other things are of any help—shall we say that with respect to a thing of this nature and this magnitude, even those very best persons in whose hands we are going to place everything must remain in the dark?

Adeim.: That is the last thing we want.

We here have ordinary language uses of both terms, where *doxa* is a representation of some *Object* (hereafter: *O*), whether to the *Subject* (hereafter: *S*) in the situation here envisaged or to her environment. As for *pistis*, two of its common uses yield possible interpretations in this context: it may be either (a) the acceptance and reliance, however justified, with which an *S* treats an *O*⁶ (or some spokesperson on behalf of another *O*),⁷ or (b) a source of such reliance:⁸ a ground for belief. I submit that (a) yields a somewhat richer and more coherent reading, in view of the sequel: the first pronouncement of a more technical nature indicating a valuation of *pistis* follows after just six pages in the explanation of the divided line.

(2) *Rep.* VI,511E1

(511D6) S.: Now please take-and-put (*labe*) upon the four segments these four affections occurring (or 'events undergone': *pathēmata ... gignomena*) in the soul, 'understanding' (*noēsin*) on the first, 'thinking' (*dianoian*) on the second; render due 'trusting' (*pistin*) to the third and 'likening' (*eikasian*) to the last one, and put them in order on this ratio (*ana logon*), that you suppose them to share in clarity (*saphēneia*) in proportion as the segments that they are on share in truth.

Adeim.: I see what you're saying. I grant your point: I order them as you tell me.

Three of these four terms are, in one translation or another, so familiar and so seminal in the history of epistemology that it is hard to recall what they might have suggested to their first audience. This makes it important to note that they are classified as mental events or processes of some kind, not for instance as faculties or states. While the morphological type of all of them, as verbal nouns, is compatible with this, the first of them (*noēsis*) in particular confirms this classification by being in the most regular and transparent way a 'name of an action', that of exercising the faculty or using the organ called 'mind', 'thought', 'understanding' (*nous*) in the activity of 'thinking', 'understanding' (*noein*), rather in the way that '(eye)sight' (*opsis* or less often *horasis*) is the use of the organ(s) called the 'eye(s)' (*ophthalmos*, *-mōi*) in the activity of seeing (*horân*); and the third term, *pistis*, comes

⁶ 'assurance' Cornford, Lee; 'trust' Bloom.

⁷ Cf. on (4) below.

⁸ In some contexts as much as a guarantee. This is excluded here by '(unable to ...) or even (to ...)' (*oude*: literally 'and not even'), implying that the predicate which is denied would make a weaker, or at least not a stronger claim than 'to grasp adequately'. Places at which *pistis* can or must be interpreted as a ground for belief or a guarantee are *Phaedr.* 256D1, 275A3, *Tim.* 37B8, *Critias* 117D1, 119D6, *Laws* III,701C1.

closest to this active status by being the name of the action or process of 'heeding', 'giving ear to', 'allowing oneself to be guided by' (**pith-tis* from the root of *peithesthai*, with an object in the dative case or implied in the context).⁹ More idiomatic translations such as 'confidence' or 'credence', or traditional halfway technical ones like 'faith' or 'belief', tend to miss this connotation of an event or act. Another, more imponderable textural feature of Socrates' tantalizingly offhand proposal is the slight variation from 'take(-and-place)' (*labe*) to 'return', 'render (due)' (*apodos*). This, I submit, comes close to being a pun, hinting at limitation: the position owed to *pistis* is only the third state of clarity and distinctness; this is an implicit rebuke addressed to all those rhetoricians and sophists who have nothing better to offer.

We might hope for some reflected light on the divided line from a context where Socrates in defining dialectic resumes this classification, but we find him still forcing us to strain our eyes groping in a twilight. After denying the (mathematical) sciences preparing for dialectic the status of 'knowledges' (*epistêmas* VII,533D4) and identifying them with what was earlier called 'thinking' (*dianoian* D6) as something midway between 'knowledge' and 'estimate' (*doxês* D5) in terms of clarity (*saphêneiai* E4), he explicitly waives technical precision by submitting that 'when our enquiry is on matters of this magnitude there is no disputing over a name', and then recapitulates the earlier division as a whole:

(3) *Rep.* VII,534A1

(533D7) S.: So it will be enough as before to call the first part 'knowledge' (*epistêmên*), the second 'thinking' (*dianoian*), the third [534] 'trusting' (*pistin*), the fourth 'likening' (*eikasian*); and the latter pair 'estimating' (*doxan*), the former 'understanding' (*noêsin*); and to say that 'estimating' has respect to becoming (*genesin*), 'understanding' to being (*ousian*); that what being is to becoming, understanding is to estimating, and that in turn what understanding is to estimating, knowledge is to trusting and thinking is to likening.

With his aptly ironic 'as before', Socrates at once drives home the preceding admonition not to stand on verbal accuracy, and goes on to take possession of the latitude he has claimed: what follows is a conspicuous displacement whereby 'understanding' comes to include as a genus what it was in the earlier scheme as the species now renamed 'knowledge'. Another new title

⁹ The second notion, *dianoia*, is related to the activity denoted by the verb *dianoieisthai* which, like the first, involves *nous*, but with two differences: (1) the preverb *dia-* adds such connotations as duration, process and/or instrumentality, and (2) the middle voice calls attention to the involvement of the subject in this process rather than to the action being intended towards an object. This subjective and process-oriented, rather than goal-oriented, character helps to explain why we have an object of the understanding or intelligible object called *to noêton* but no objects of thinking or reasoning called *ta dianoêta*.—The fourth disposition, *eikasia*, is named after an activity of *eikazein* whose nature is not quite clear and probably not homogeneous. I hope to be excused from dwelling on it because Plato seems to be using it deliberately as a foil, a deterrent contrast to properly cognitive processes.

in this connection is *doxa*, which like *pistis* was introduced in (1) above but has now moved from being an *O* to being the attribute of an *S*.¹⁰

Both knowledge and estimate are again brought in relation to *pistis* in its last occurrence in the *Republic*. The interlocutors are determining a ranking order between skills (*tekhnas* X,601D1), and so between practitioners, of using (*khřsomenên* D1), producing (*poiêsousan* D2), and ‘replicating’ (*mimêsomenên* D2).¹¹ They have agreed that the goodness, fineness and correctness (*aretê kai kallos kai orthotês* D4) of each piece of equipment, living being or action (*skeuous kai zôiou kai praxeôs* D4-5) is to be determined by referring to the use (*pros tên khreian esti* D5) for which it had been produced or for which it was fitted by nature (*pepoiêmenon ê pephukos* D6), therefore necessarily the user (*ton khřômenon* D8) has most experience (*empeirotaton* D8) and reports (*aggelon gignesthai* D9) to the producer how good or bad the latter’s products prove in the former’s use of them (D9-10), and it is he the user (e.g. the flute-player) who will tell the producer (e.g. the flute-maker) how to make his products (e.g. flutes; D10-E1).¹² Then ...

(4) *Rep.* X,601E7

(601E4) *S.*: Is not the person who knows (*eidôs*), the person who pronounces (*exag-gellei*) on flutes both sound and defective, but the one who trusts (*pisteuôn*), the one who produces them?

Adeim.: It is.

S.: Then with one and the same piece of equipment, its producer will have a correct conviction (*pistin orthên*) about its being in order or defective, by associating with the person who knows and being forced [602] to listen to him, but its user will have knowledge (*epistêmên*)?

Adeim.: Just so.

S.: And the person who sets down a replica (*ho mimêtês*), will he from his use of the things he represents have knowledge of their being in order and correct or not, or will he have a correct estimate (*doxan orthên*) owing to his being forced to associate with the person who knows and being told how he must represent them (*graphein*)?

Adeim.: He will have neither.

S.: Then the producer of a replica will neither know nor make correct estimates (*oute ... eisetai oute ortha doxasei* A8) about the things he represents, as to their being in order or defective.

Adeim.: It looks like he won’t.

Socrates’ first proposition (X,601E5-7) establishes a contextual association of *pistis* with the cognate verb *pisteuein*, his third and fourth proposition (602A4-8) establish one with *doxa* and the verb derived from it, *doxazein*. The former verb, and the feature (which is not in the terminology but in the present context) of associating with the person who knows, actualize one

¹⁰ Cf. n. 5 on (1) above.

¹¹ Usually translated ‘imitating’. For the meaning of ‘mimesis’, see Kardaun (1993), as well as chapter 5, section 2, of this volume.

¹² Socrates implies that the flute-maker is in relation to the flute-player on a par with the flute by applying to both the verb ‘serve’ (*hupêretôsin, hupêretêsei* E1-2).

potential connotation of *pistis* referred to before,¹³ that of allowing oneself to be guided by, of relying upon, another; a reliance that is in this case correct (*orthon*) because the guide is the person who knows (has *epistêmê*).¹⁴ The person who is not even subjected to this association is thereby denied access to correct estimates (*doxai*). Your *pistis* is appropriate in proportion to the credibility of the object or authority that you place it in.¹⁵

Although the context is very different, this is relevant to the debate in the *Republic*'s central books in at least one way: it marks the space for a sound and legitimate order in which some of the members have nothing better than *pistis* to go by, provided that it is not they themselves who decide where to place their *pistis*. The person who cannot reach beyond the third section of the divided line is all right for practical purposes, and so, a fortiori, are his betters, as long as he hears and obeys them that know. While knowledge and understanding cannot be transferred down the line to the many, correctness can.

For our question, the relevance of this passage is that it opens the way to believing upon authority, such as that of prophet or priest—whether or not Plato himself would have invested the philosopher ruler with such authority. One of the ways in which the *Republic*'s epistemology is tied up with its politics, is that the unity of a city in which each citizen performs what is his or hers is at the same time the unity of a collective knowing subject as a body in which instruction is handed down to its members along hierarchical lines that keep the majority of these members at one or several removes from knowledge of the truth; a body in that respect and to that extent analogous to the Common-wealth that Hobbes described as

an Artificiall Man ... in which, the *Sovereignty* is an Artificiall *Soul*, as giving life and motion to the whole body; The *Magistrates* ... artificiall *Joynts* ...; *Counsellors*, by whom all things needfull for it to know, are suggested unto it, are the *Memory*; *Equity* and *Lawes*, an artificiall *Reason* and *Will*¹⁶

We shall find evidence of a comparable conception in the concluding pages of what is according to tradition and by common consent Plato's last work, the *Laws*. But let us first turn to another more or less formal account of the relation between *pistis* and knowledge.

¹³ At (1) above.

¹⁴ The one who has knowledge (*epistêmên* 602A1&3) at her disposal is here called the knowing or the knower (*ho eidôs* 601E4, *tôi eidoti* 602A5, cf. 8), with the participle of a verb 'to know' that is morphologically a perfect tense from the root (*eid-*) of the verb used in the aorist tense as 'to see' (*eidon*, infinitive *idein*). This establishes for *knowing* the same analogy with direct perception as if by sight, that we traced by a different path in the case of mind and understanding.

¹⁵ Cf. last section below, p. 132 ff.

¹⁶ *Leviathan*, Introduction.

3. Trust and Knowledge daughters of Persuasion

Early on in the *Gorgias*, Socrates has got Gorgias to agree to having his claim formulated as being ‘that rhetoric is a manufacturer of persuasion’ (454A2). At Socrates’ request Gorgias specifies that it is the art of persuasion that takes place in law courts and among other crowds, and that it revolves around things just and unjust. Socrates calls for a yet more complete account (*perainesthai* C2, *perainêi* 5). Isn’t there a difference between ‘having learned’ (*memathêkenai* C7-8) and ‘having come to trust’ or ‘to believe’ (*pepisteukenai* 8)?

(5) *Gorg.* 454D1-3

S.: Which of the two: do you estimate that having learned and having come to trust, and so learning and trusting (*kai mathêsis kai pistis*), are the same thing or (that each is) something else?

Gorgias thinks they are different. Socrates approves, and supplies a reason: there is both false and true belief-on-trust, but not both false and true knowledge (D6-7). Still, both those who have learned and those who have come to believe, have had a conviction instilled in them, are subject to a persuasion (*pepeismenoi* E1). So we are to suppose there are two types (*eidê* E3) of persuasion, one (*a*) that furnishes belief-upon-trust without knowing (*eidenai* E4), and one (*b*) that does furnish knowledge (*epistêmên*). Rhetoric is of the first type: it is a manufacturer of persuasion of a believing-upon-trust type (*pisteutikês* 455A1) rather than an instructing, teaching type (*didaskalikês*), around just and unjust. If this is so, then the orator is not engaged in instructing (*didaskalikos* A3) law courts and other crowds on the subject of things just and unjust, but merely in persuading (*pistikos* or *peistikos* A4).

What we find here is a *genus* of ‘being under a persuasion’ (*pepeisthai*) brought about by Persuasion, divided into a pair of *species*, one of trust or belief and of trusting and believing upon trust (*pistis*), the other of knowing (*eidenai*) or knowledge (*epistêmê*) as a result of teaching or ‘instruction’ (*didakhê*) and ‘learning’ (*mathêsis* 454D2). Both of them presuppose a source of persuasion outside and a subject adopting input from this source. In the one, this adoption is uncritical and indiscriminate, unable to tell falsehood from truth; in the other, which takes a longer time (*ou ... en oligôi khronôi* 455A5-6), the subject comes to ‘have seen’ and thus know (*eidenai* 454E8), which is possible only with what is really and truly there. According to a popular etymology this is what is ‘un-hidden’ (*alêthês*). We shall find contexts in which one can conceive of this absence of (things) ‘being hidden’ (of *lanthanein*) as an absence of (one’s) ‘having things hidden from one’ or of ‘having forgotten’ (of *lêthesthai*): a freedom of forgetfulness, an ‘unforgetfulness’ presumably or at least conceivably brought about by recollection.

4. *Trust and Truth as states of the soul*

Timaeus, in the dialogue named after him, begins his first extended speech on the subject of ‘how the all has come into being or again is without coming to be’ (*peri tou pantos ... hêi gegonen ê kai agenês estin* 27C4-5) by praying—or rather, by performatively expressing the need to pray—that the company will speak ‘in accordance with what the gods have in mind’ (*kata noun* C7), i.e. in a way that will please them. For his own part, he wishes to demonstrate in the most comprehensible way how he thinks (*dianooumai* D3) about the issues before them. The first division to be made is between (1) that which at all times is and has no coming to be—this is (to be) grasped by understanding (*noêsei* 28A1) accompanied by account (*logou*)—and (2) that which at all times is coming to be and never is—which is (to be) estimated by estimate with the help of sensation of which there is no account; this is what comes into being and perishes, but never really is. Now even that which comes to be, needs some kind of cause to do so. All that is modelled by its manufacturer on that which is always the same is necessarily good, but what has a model that has in turn come to be is not good. So when we come to the heaven or the world or whichever name it would accept, the first thing to ask is whether it was always there with no beginning of coming-to-be, or has come to be from some beginning. The latter is the case, for it has body, and can be grasped by estimate with the help of sensation, and all such things, we have seen, are coming to be or have come to be. Of its father and maker there is little we can say, but we can answer the question which kind of thing this architect took as his model [29]: if the world and its manufacturer are good, then he obviously fixed his eye on what is eternal. The alternative it is blasphemous even to put into words: the world is the best of all things that have come to be, and he the best of causes. So it has been manufactured with a view to what is grasped by account and insight (*phronêsei* A7) and is the same (always—or as these). This means it is the likeness (*eikona* B2) of something. Now the greatest part of every undertaking is that it should have the beginning that suits (its) nature. So with regard to image and model we should determine that their accounts are akin to the things they are interpreting: stable and unchangeable, and as irrefutable as any account can be, in the case of that which is stable and firm and plain to see with the help of mind; likely and in proportion (*ana logon*, with the noun so far translated by ‘account’) to the former in the case of what has been made like this and is a likeness ...

(6) *Tim.* 29C3

For truth is to belief as being is to becoming.

So we must, on the subject of gods and the coming to be of the all, be content with the most likely account, rather than overreach our merely human selves for completely accurate and self-consistent accounts.

The translation given above to the four terms in this proportion is that of both Jowett and Cornford. Perhaps there is no better one to be found. All the more reason to note where it is unhelpful or might be misleading. Timaeus has for a page and a half been persuing the strictest parallel between the two sides of his great divide. The proportion should live up to this strictness. Does it? Is belief complementary to truth in the way that becoming is to being? What is the genus of, or the *tertium comparationis* between, belief and truth? Does it make sense to say, what we are formally entitled to deduce, that truth is to being as belief is to becoming?

With 'being' and 'becoming' we have a straightforward opposition between two abstract nouns implying two classes, one of things that are (*onta*) and one of things that become (*gignomena*)—disregarding for now the question whether there is any overlap or interweaving between these, or what is the relation between them in general. To extract the fullest sense out of Timaeus' claim, we need to look for an interpretation that makes *alêtheia* and *pistis* just as closely parallel and as much of a pair. The way to do so, I submit, is to take *alêtheia* to refer to the state of the *subject* that has knowledge, that has at its disposal what is called truth according to more common uses of this term. Can the word bear this interpretation? Most of us nowadays are probably most comfortable with the notion of truth as (1) a property of propositions (or statements, or sentences etc.), but as readers of the Platonic tradition we have also become familiar with truth as (2) a property of beings or things: that of their being *real*, more or less. However, in Plato's work a (3) 'subjective' use of *alêtheia* can be found that is less generally recognized. I submit that this yields the most natural way to read a number of contexts in which the term is paired with one that more unambiguously denotes a mental, esp. cognitive state, such as the following passages.¹⁷

The clearest instance of truth and being true in this sense is perhaps

(6a) *Laws* V,730C4

Truth leads the way among all things good, whether for gods or humans. May the one who is to become happy and blessed, share in it from the very start, in order that he may live the longest possible time being truthful (*alêthês ôn*)! For he is trustworthy; but untrustworthy (*apistos* C4) (is) the person who is on familiar terms with (*hôi philon* C4-5)

¹⁷ A complete survey of Plato's uses of *alêthês* and words derived from it would have to take into account other terms in whose context they are found. All that is needed for present purposes is a selection of such uses as could parallel my reading of the *Timaeus* passage. There is nothing in the structure of the Greek word (*a-lêth-ês*) that would dictate or favour one of the uses (1) to (3) rather than the other. It is possible that a context can be understood on more than one reading of the use of a term occurring in it: one way to look at the meaning of an item of vocabulary is as a bundle of distinctions or connotations, some of which may be blocked and others highlighted by features of the context.

intentional falsehood (*pseudos hekousion* C5), and he that is so with unintentional (falsehood is) mindless (*anous*); neither of which is enviable.¹⁸

Other instances that I would propose to read in the same way are

(6 b) *Rep.* VI,490B6

(that the true lover of learning) will not cease from his desire till he has clasped the nature of that which each thing by itself is, with the appropriate part of his soul, i.e. with the part akin to this, and having approached and really mixed with what really is, then, having begotten mind and truth (*gennēsas noun kai alētheian*), will discern and truly (*alēthōs*) live and nourish himself, and only then, but not before, cease from pain?

(6 c) *Phaedo* 66A6

(the body) as perturbing the soul and not allowing it to acquire truth and insight (*alēthēian te kai phronēsin*) ...

And arguably, later in the same dialogue

(6 d) *Phaedo* 90D7

(that a person) should spend the rest of his life detesting and vilifying arguments, and be deprived of the truth and knowledge of the things that are (*tōn de ontōn tēs alētheias te kai epistēmēs sterētheiē*)

If these examples legitimize interpreting *alētheia* as well as *pistis* in our *Timaeus* passage (6) as states of the soul of the cognitive subject, then we find here neither revaluation nor demotion of *pistis*. It is simply Socrates' desire to see his picture in motion (19B) that reduces us to *pistis*. For this is the highest activity of the soul in relation to the process-aspect of things, to perceptual change, just as much as truth(fulness) is its highest activity in relation to the reality-aspect of things. The realm of perceptual change needs a conceptual constancy—which Plato represents as a superlatively real constancy—even to comprehend it insofar as it can be comprehended and to describe it, and ultimately, according to Plato, for it even to be, or more precisely become. *Pistis* is the 'adequation' of the soul to the phenomenal realm, just as *alētheia* is the *adaequatio mentis ad res*, i.e. *formas*: to the noumenal realm. This phenomenal realm is not one to be discarded lightly: it includes the gods and the coming-to-be of an All that is best of what has come to be: the sum total, or rather comprehensive unity of visible goodness and beauty. The accounts (*logous* 29C6) and story (*muthon* D2) that *pistis* will enable Timaeus to offer are *eikotas* (C8, *eikota* D2) not just in the sense of being 'likely', but also in that of being suitable and appropriate.

¹⁸ Another example of use (3) of the noun *alētheia*, I submit, is *Rep.* VII,537D7, and one of the analogous use of the verb *alētheuein* is *Rep.* III,413A7-8 *to ta onta doxazein alētheuein dokei ... einai*.

*5. Trust a condition or a part of virtue, or:
while Trust is not good enough, some Dis-trust is all bad*

Towards the end of the *Laws*, the speaker from Athens indicates to his interlocutors that their legislation is more or less complete (XII,960B4-5), except that they still need a means to preserve it (*sôtêrian* (B7) *tôn nomôn* D3-4, *politeiai te kai tois nomois* E9-10). Upon Cleinias' question what could serve this role, the Athenian refers to the council earlier mentioned, which was to meet before daybreak, consisting of Wardens of the Laws (*nomophulakôn* 961A2) and other persons of outstanding merit, together with a number of junior members judged by the elder ones to show exceptional promise. He affirms that this council will be the anchor of the city and the preservation of all their chosen goals (*sôizein an sumpanta ha bou-lometha* C6), in the way that in living beings the soul and the head are what is naturally fit to preserve them (D2-3), by the fusion (*kratheis* D9) of the understanding (*nous* D7) coming to be in their soul, and the eyesight and hearing, the finest of the senses, in their head (D8-9). Similarly a ship is preserved by the keen senses of helmsman and crew fused with the helmsman's understanding (*nous* E1&4). Two more analogues, those of military expeditions (E8) and medical aid (E9), bring out that this understanding consists in discerning the mark (*skopon* E9) at which to aim (*stokhazoit' an* 962A1). A city, then, needs something that recognizes or discerns (*gignô-skôn* B5) first the target a statesman ought to keep in sight (A9-10, B5-6), then the way to reach this, and finally what laws (primarily) and what persons (secondarily) offer sound advice (*kalôs sumbouleuei* B8) to this purpose. Without such discernment a city is mindless and senseless (*anous ... kai anaisthêtos* C2-3). The place to put this protective device (*phulaktêrion* C7) is in the nocturnal council, which needs all virtue (*aretên* D2), but this begins with an unwavering focus on the one target (D2-5). Virtue, in fact, is this target (963A2-4); and virtue was seen to have four parts, but the part that should guide the other three as well as everything else is mind or understanding (*noun ... hêgemonia* A8).¹⁹ The understanding specifically required of the statesman is that of virtue, the virtues, and how they are at once many and one (963C3-4A5). These explanations (from 962D2 to 964A4) are deliberately and systematically circular, or rather centripetal, designed to re-fract our partial insights so as to converge in a synoptic view (*sunidein* 963C3)²⁰ of the fundamental and originative unity of virtue with understanding. Our wardens need a more accurate (*akribesterous* 964D4) discernment of virtue than that of the majority, if the city is to be made like the

¹⁹ Plato characteristically varies the wording: *phronêsin* C9, 964B6, 965D2, *psukhê phronimos te kai noun ekhousa* 963E6-7.

²⁰ Cf. *sunorônta* below, 965B10. The word recalls, no doubt intentionally, the *sunoptikos* who is *dialektikos* of *Rep.* VII,537C7.

head and senses of those that have insight (*emphronôn* D5):²¹ the city itself is just a torso (*kutous* E2), the council's younger members supplying its senses (E2-6),²² their seniors comparable to its mind, using the help and advice of the juniors, so that between them they preserve the city (965A1-4).²³ What is required for this is (B7-10) just the craftsman or warden's ability to speed on from a view of the many to a recognition of the one and, having done that, to order everything else in relation to this, keeping it in synoptic view. Now can any one get a more accurate inspection and view of anything than by being able to look away from the many and dissimilar (*anomoion* C3) up to the one form (*idean* C2)?

At this point Cleinias needs a little prodding:

(7) *Laws* XII,965C7

Cl.: I suppose so (or 'Presumably': *isôs*).²⁴

Ath.: No 'supposing', my friend! There really and truly is no more clear and distinct (*saphestera*) way to proceed than this one for any human.

Cl.: Trusting on you (*soi pisteuôn*) then, sir, I grant it; let us continue our talk on this understanding.

Having secured this concession, the Athenian affirms the need to bring this ability to bear, first, on that nature of virtue which is the same in all four virtues: whether it is as one, or a whole, or both of these, or in whatever other way (D6-7); then on the fine and the good (966A5) and on all that is worth trouble (B4): real wardens of the laws should really know all that concerns the truth of these, and be capable of interpreting it in speech and following it up in deeds, discriminating what is done properly from what is not (done) as nature dictates (B5-8). One of the noblest subjects is to know (*eidenai* C3), as much as a human can discern and recognize this (*gignôskein* C4), the existence and power of the gods: for the majority of the citizens it is enough to acknowledge this (*sungignôskein* C5) merely following the pronouncement (*têi phêmêi*) of the laws, but to our company of wardens we shall not admit ...

(8) *Laws* XII,966C7

any one who has not laboured to grasp every ground for belief (or proof : *pistin*) there is about gods.

²¹ Or just conceivably, 'if our city is to be made like that of those that have insight, with head and senses'.

²² They also have memory: *tais mnêmâis* (E5)—unless the memories they are said to transmit (*paradidonai*) their observations (*aisthêseis*) to are those of the elders they report to, but it is more natural to think of a messenger (*exangelous* E6) as having committed to memory the content of her message.

²³ Syntactical ambiguity allows the Athenian to begin by claiming that it is the elders who preserve it (*tous gerontas bouleuesthai kai hupêretais khrômenous meta sumboulias tois neois houtô dê koinêi sôizein* ... A2-4) and to end by conceding that the two divisions do this both together (*koinêi sôizein amphoterous* A4).

²⁴ This sentence adverb strictly conveys that the statement is as likely to be true as false, but in practice, that we may fairly take it to be true.

Now the interlocutors have earlier seen that ...

(9) *Laws* XII,966D7

the things leading to belief (*pistin*) about gods are two, to wit, (1) the seniority and divinity of the soul among all that owes being to a movement that has inherited ever-flowing becoming,²⁵ and (2) the orderly rotation of the heavenly bodies controlled by all-arranging mind (*nous* E4). For no human is so godless that having thoroughly sighted these could make him godless,²⁶ the way people think astronomy and related studies can do to you by showing you how things can happen²⁷ by necessities, rather than by the purposive-thoughts (*dianoiais* 967A4) of a will-whose-preferential-choice-is-exercised (*boulêseôs*) around goods-to-be-brought-about (*agathôn peri teloumenôn* A5). This danger attends only upon the notion that these bodies could be devoid of soul (*apsukha* A8, B3, C4); what is needed for a mortal to be steadily in awe of the gods, is to 'take' or 'grasp' (*labêi* D5) these two points, (1) the soul's seniority, immortality and rule over all bodies, and (2) the 'mind and understanding of the things that are' (*ton noun ... tôn on-tôn* D8-E1) said by us to be among the heavenly bodies, the subjects of learning prerequisite to this, and their 'community' with what belongs to the Muse; this he has to join with practices belonging to the characters and with what is of the laws, and to be able to give the reason or account of all that has one (*hosa te logon ekhei toutôn dunatos dounai te logon* E4-968A1), or he can never be a ruler but only an executive serving others' ruling. The task that remains is to devise an education (*paideias* B1) that will put into each student's soul this knowledge (*epistêmên* E2), and then, realizing the community of head and mind that we described in speech (969B5-7), to establish this nocturnal council of rulers and wardens (968A6-7) unmatched in the virtue by which they preserve us (*pros aretên sôtêrias* 969C1-3).

What does all this add to our question? First, this passage, conspicuously placed at the end of Plato's second and final *magnum opus*, confirms the point, implicit in the *Republic*, that the majority of the population of a model city need to believe certain things on the basis of authority. Trying to replicate Plato's attempt to extract deep meaning from his vocabulary: although unable to 'cognize', to 'know', to 'have science' of these things (*gignô-skein*), they should at least 're-cognize', 'ac-know-ledge', 'be con-scientious of and con-scientious about' (*sun-gignôskein*) them, following what is said by the laws rather than treading their own path by the compass of reason. This will be a trusting (*pisteuein*), moved by a persuasion (*peithô*) that has not been, because it cannot in these persons be, internalized so as to be converted into knowledge—if indeed it is not moved by force (*bia*) and compulsion (*anankê*), the rod not spared in the enforcement of other parts of the law.

²⁵ Not, I submit, "anything that draws perennial being from a motion that once had a beginning" (Taylor): in *hôn kinêsis genesin paralabousa aenaon ousian eporisen* the epithet *aenaon* may be placed next to *ousian*, but it is syntactically quite capable of being taken with *genesin*, to which its strict sense is closer akin; it is best taken *apo koinou*, as an instance of iconicity illustrating the inextricable bond between being and everlasting becoming.

²⁶ Again a kind of circularity: to become godless you must in some sense be godless.

²⁷ Or 'things that can happen ...' (*hôs hoion te gignomena anankais pragmata* 967A3-4); the construction of *hoion te* with a participle is irregular and the preceding *hôs* 'how' or 'that' does not make things clearer; *oiontai* Apelt, followed by Des Places.

Secondly, the passage states quite plainly what it is that the strictly speaking ignorant majority have to believe in before anything. They have to believe in the existence and the power of the gods; and while they cannot know what gods are, their not being 'godless' (*atheos*) must at least imply the recognition of souls ruling over bodies and working for good: of design by a mind.

Thirdly, even those who can in the end come to know, are committed to this belief in gods *before* they complete, indeed before they even embark on their Journey to the Mind of Things that Are. Their education is explicitly intended to lead to this belief; it will consist first and foremost in working through all possible grounds for this belief, and they will be selected for it by the criterion of their aptitude for this curriculum. So at this stage their choice is not even determined by their personal commitment to this belief, but by their electors' commitment to the belief, and by these electors' assessment of their disciple's prospect of embracing and internalizing it.

Finally, if it makes any sense to read the *Laws* as being to some extent a code for the use of future codifiers or a series of instructions to instructors, then it is significant that, as witnessed by (7) above, a leap of trust is needed even for the interlocutors' mutual agreement (*sunomologiai* 966A2) on the single indispensable ability (*dunaton* 965B9, C3) required in the city's wardens, and through this on the form of the city to be founded.

This is not to deny the force of the Athenian's insistence on what this ability of the rulers is: the intellectual one of advancing from the many to the one. Nor is it to disregard the related requirement of not just perceiving by reason or thought (*dianoieisthai* 966A8-9) and in the understanding or mind (*ennoein* B1) that, and in what way (*hôs* A6, *hopôs te kai hopêi* A7, 8), virtue, nobility and goodness are each of them one, but also of being able to demonstrate this by argument (*tên endeixin tôi logôi endeiknusthai* B1-2). The point is not that reasoned belief is not preferred to unreasoned belief; it is that, rather than belief following reason wherever it leads, reason is to support beliefs selected on the basis of other criteria than those of reason, or at least of reason alone.

6. *He is not and he is*

In one important sense Shorey is clearly right. That *pistis* in Plato is 'of course' not "faith" is true, indeed a trivial truth, if all that it means is that Plato's conception of *pistis* is quite different from Hebrew or Christian ones; that, for instance, it does not involve belief in the divine nature of a particular individual, or conceiving of this belief in terms of grace, or of an infused virtue that is a necessary condition for salvation.

But it does not follow from this that 'Neoplatonists, Christians, and commentators' alone are to be blamed for having 'confused the two ideas

hopelessly'. It seems fair to point out that Plato has exposed himself to being read in ways that suited the diverse agendas of these overlapping sets of readers in at least three ways.

(1) We have seen the Athenian of the *Laws* requiring assent to propositions on grounds which might be religious, ethical or psychological, or more than one of these: one might say, for their *pragmatic* truth value. It will not do to explain this as a peremptoriness on the part of an ageing Plato anxious and impatient for concrete results: the Platonic Socrates had appealed to similar considerations where reason failed or needed support. We need only think of his rejection, in the *Meno*, of the eristic argument against the possibility of learning, on the ground that it would make us lazy (*argous* 81D6, cf. 86B9), in favour of an account of the transmigration of the soul offered by priests and inspired poets that Socrates 'trusts to be true' (*hōi egō pisteuōn alêthei einai* 81E1-2) because it renders us active and inquisitive. Or of his studied attempt in the *Phaedo* to replace disbelief (*apistia* 70A1) by belief or trust (*pistis* B2) on the subject of the survival of the soul. Or of his profession in the *Republic*, at the end of one round of legislating for his city in speech, that the 'first and foremost and finest pieces of legislation' are to be enacted at the prompting, through his oracle at the navel of the earth, of the god of our fathers, since of these (divine) matters we neither have knowledge (*epistametha*), nor shall we, if we have an understanding mind (*noun*), listen to any (i.e. human) interpreter other than this ancestral one (427B2-C4). Here too, one thing understanding does for you is to tell you the limitations of reason.

(2) In an account of the acquisition of political knowledge that is implicit in the *Republic* and explicit in the *Laws*, the imagery of the 'body' politic invites comparison not only to Hobbes but also to the notion of the Church as the (mystical) body of Christ. It is here especially that two connotations of 'faith' come to concur, i.e. (1) that of *trust* and reliance upon some spokesperson, with (2) that of *belief* in some proposition, whether or not this be a claim about the existence of some entity. Plato's statements on the distributing, or perhaps rather administering, to the body of the polis as a whole that knowledge which is found only in its head or in certain representatives and deputies of this head, make him, if not the intellectual author, then at least an intellectual ancestor of the concept of *implicit* faith. One may feel that the Socrates of the *Apology* would be more nearly at home in Wittenberg or Geneva, whereas his namesake in the *Republic* and the Athenian of the *Laws* are closer to Rome.

(3) Yet the most decisive way in which Plato may be said to be making room for faith, is by not so much annulling knowledge as effacing its boundaries: by his insistence on transcendence and transcendent objects. In *Republic* VI, it is well known, we find Socrates postulating as the 'cause of knowledge and truth' (*aitian epistêmês kai alêtheias* 508E3-4) a good, itself

not being but 'even beyond being' (*eti epekeina tês ousias* 509B9), bearing the same relation to Mind and the objects of its understanding, that its child the sun does to eyesight and the things it sees (*hotiper auto ... pros te noun kai ta nooumena touto ... pros te opsin kai ta horômena* 508B13-C2), which not only confers upon the objects of cognition their being-discerned (*tois gignôskomenois ... to gignôskesthai ... hupo tou agathou pareinai* 509B6), but even bestows upon them their reality and their being (*kai to einai te kai tên ousian hup' ekeinou autois proseinai* B7-8). From this it is not a long step to Plotinus' postulating in *Ennead* VI.9 an awareness of the One not, as with other objects of Mind, by knowledge or understanding, but by a presence 'stronger than knowledge' (*mêde kat' epistêmên ... mêde kata noêsin ... alla kata parousian epistêmês kreittona* VI.9.4). What are for Plato occasional flashes and flourishes, become with Plotinus just more sustained and systematic efforts, arising from intimate meditations on an internalized Plato, while informed and fertilized by the philosophical achievement of the six hundred years separating the two.

It can I think be shown (1) that Plotinus is not confusing one idea of *pistis* with another any more than Plato is.²⁸ This again is not to deny that Plotinus in his turn may have made it easier for Christians to read Plato in a way that harmonized with their religious beliefs. If so, it might be interesting to find out (2) whether the decline of the Neoplatonic interpretation of Plato during the half century from the publication of the *Critique*, via Hegel's lectures on the history of philosophy, down to Schleiermacher's fresh presentation of the dialogues, owes anything to Kant's unmasking of transcendental illusion, and the radically new turn this gave to the concept of dialectic. But these things will be for another joyous occasion.²⁹

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²⁸ Perhaps we should take Shorey's 'Neoplatonists and Christians' *formaliter*, as referring to (Neo)Platonizing actual Christians.

²⁹ In revising this essay I have profited from comments on content or style by Anne Nixon, Marlein van Raalte, Peter Stork, and the late C.M.J. Sicking.

CHAPTER FIVE
PLATONIC ART THEORY: A RECONSIDERATION

MARIA KARDAUN

1. Introduction

Plato's philosophical views on art raise many problems that have not yet been solved. Many of his dialogues seem incompatible with one another in what they—explicitly or implicitly—say about the philosophical status and the social function of art: in several dialogues Plato speaks about art as something very valuable and about the artist as if he were a kind of prophet, revealing sacred truths to mankind,¹ but in others the unsuspecting reader is left with the impression that art is regarded by Plato as essentially trivial and even dangerous, and that artists are mistrusted by him to the extent of hatred.²

Still more problematic is that Platonic art theory seems to be inconsistent even within one and the same dialogue: in books II and III of the *Republic* Plato apparently condemns only some parts of literature, whereas in book X, where he specifies his philosophical reasons for banishing “Homer and the like” from his ideal city, one gets the impression that he condemns literature, and even artistic creation, as a whole.

The problem in the traditional reading is connected closely, as I see it, with a misunderstanding of the key term *μίμησις*, which takes this Greek word to mean ‘(trivial) imitation’. This misconception has led to the false conclusion that at least according to book X of the *Republic* works of art are always far removed from ideal Reality. In Platonic philosophy—it is said—art, including poetry, has a low ontological status. It is mere *μίμησις*, that is to say ‘(trivial) imitation’. Being *μίμησις*, art is at two removes from Reality (the transcendent world of the eternal Forms), and therefore art is of necessity untrue and cannot but have a bad moral effect on its public. In some exceptional cases, however, art may happen to be true and have the right moral effect on its public!

The contradiction in the above presentation of Plato's views on art is too prominent to be ignored: if art is necessarily untrue and bad for compelling

¹ E.g. *Ion* 533-6; *Meno* 99; *Phdr.* 244-5; *Laws* III,682A.

² E.g. *Gorg.* 501E-2D; *Rep.* II,376E-III,403C and X,595-608B; *Laws* XII,941B.

ontological reasons, then the possibility of the existence of true and worthwhile art should naturally be excluded by Plato. But the fact is that Plato recognises not only the possibility, but indeed the factual existence of art that is both true and worthwhile.³

To this is added an unease of another kind: reading the Platonic dialogues one is inevitably impressed by their imaginative power and sophisticated elegance. In all the discussions that Plato's work provokes, its literary quality at least has never been disputed. That a literary genius like Plato would have such a limited horizon when it comes to defining the true nature of literature and art is the last conclusion that one is willing to draw.

These observations are of course far from new, and many hypotheses have been put forward to account for Plato's supposedly primitive and inconsistent critique of the arts. They vary from simply assuming that Plato did not bother about consistency at all,⁴ to a range of sometimes very elaborate theories concerning the unique historical and psychological backgrounds of his conception of art.

A common line of thought is that poets and poetry are considered by Plato as competitive to philosophy, and that in his endeavour to eliminate his much detested rivals he must have been less than usually concerned about consistency or logic.⁵ Another kind of explanation—also popular—is that Plato is fighting an enemy not so much outside, but within, and that his attacks against poetry are more or less irrational and unbalanced, due to “the hold it continued to have over part of his being”.⁶ Another theory claims that it is no use trying to find a fixed view of poetry in Plato's work because this view develops: in his early dialogues, where he deals with artistic inspiration in a relatively friendly manner, Plato is still under the influence of his teacher Socrates, and it is not until *Republic* X that he straightforwardly rejects art.⁷ According to yet another hypothesis Plato's supposed lack of a unified art theory has to be attributed to a development of another kind: being a child of his time, Plato was imbued with the doctrine that art is ‘imitation’. Deep down, however, the primitivity of this doctrine repelled him and gradually, though not systematically, he came to better insights.⁸

³ E.g. *Ion* 534D-E; *Phdr.* 245A; *Laws* III,680B and 681E-2A.

⁴ E.g. Melberg (1995) 12 f. Melberg is quite right in his epistemological remark that the “urgent need for meaning” exists in the reader's mind only, but this does not imply, I think, that interpreters should make it their principle to deny their readers the fulfilment of this need.

⁵ E.g. Cornford (1945) 321-2. Cornford has nonetheless contributed greatly to our awareness of the consistency of Plato's art conception.

⁶ E.g. Else (1986) 3-5.

⁷ Halliwell (1993² [1988]) 3 f. A most conspicuous problem of this theory is that in *Phaedrus* and *Laws*, that is to say after the *Republic*, Plato deals with the subject of poetic inspiration in much the same (positive) way as he had done in his early work. This fact is recognised by Halliwell, but he leaves it at that.

⁸ Mertens (1981) 644-6 and 697-8. This hypothesis links up with the general idea that art theories in the course of history have gradually improved. There is no sufficient reason, however, to suppose that art was originally looked upon as ‘imitation’ by the Greeks, nor is there

Still another hypothesis suggests that it was not art theory that was primitive in Plato's lifetime, but art itself, and that it was its "increasing tendency towards realism" that worried Plato and that caused him sometimes to exaggerate the deficiencies of poetry.⁹

At the basis of these and other hypotheses concerning Platonic art theory there are two assumptions which to my mind are mistaken and which I would like to discuss. One I have already mentioned, namely the misunderstanding that the Greek word *μίμησις* should be understood as 'imitation', with a connotation of pertaining to the surface of things only—or at least that it is used in this sense by Plato in *Republic* X. We will come to this in the next section. The other assumption is that Plato treats 'art and artists' as one subject-matter, as if all that he says about artists referred automatically also to art, and vice versa. This will be dealt with in sections 3 and 4. I believe that in the adjustment of these two misconceptions lies the key to a better understanding of Plato's attitude towards art. What I hope to show is that this attitude is not an isolated eccentricity of Plato, but that it is part of a thorough and fairly coherent theory concerning the function and essence of art, a theory, moreover, that fits well with the other basic tenets of Plato's thought.

This is not to deny that Platonic art theory has some characteristics that may be called eccentric, perhaps even weird. But, as I see it, this weirdness is a built-in characteristic of Platonic philosophy as a whole: it is the result much more of the iron logic with which Plato fits everything, including art, into his system than of any incoherent thinking.

2. Meaning and use of the word 'mimesis'

It is well known that in antiquity art was generally connected with the concept of *μίμησις*.¹⁰ Both Plato and Aristotle take it for granted that the arts, including poetry, are essentially 'mimetic' in character.¹¹

Now, what does *μίμησις* mean? In most of the older translations of Greek texts *μίμησις* is systematically rendered with 'imitation'.¹² In the very oldest translations one may find sentences such as that someone's behaviour *imitates* tyranny,¹³ or that music should *imitate* brave and self-

any trace in Plato's dialogues of a development from an art theory based on 'imitation' to one based on 'representation'.

⁹ Verdenius (1978 [1949]) 270 f. The same view is found in FehI (1961) 67.

¹⁰ This section summarises Kardaun (1993).

¹¹ E.g. Plato *Laws* II,668A6-7: Οὐκοῦν μουσικὴν γε πᾶσάν φαμεν εἰκαστικὴν τε εἶναι καὶ μιμητικὴν; Aristotle *Poet.* I.1447a13-6 *et passim*.

¹² French: 'imitation'; German: 'Nachahmung'; Dutch: 'nabootsing'.

¹³ Thucydides I,95 / Foster Smith (1919) 161: "his behaviour seemed an aping of despotic power". In order to make her translation work, Jacqueline de Romilly even changes the abstract object of *μίμησις* in this passage into something concrete: τυραννίδος *μίμησις* is translated by

controlled men,¹⁴ or that a godlike face is an *imitation* of beauty,¹⁵ or that laws that are made by a true statesman will be *imitations* of (ideal) truth,¹⁶ or that musical tunes contain *imitations* of moral moods,¹⁷ or that planes and solid figures are the geometric *imitations* of composite numbers,¹⁸ or that tragedy *imitates* man as better than he actually is, whereas comedy *imitates* him as worse,¹⁹ or that the secrecy with which certain rites are performed *imitates* the transcendent nature of the divine.²⁰ Such puzzling utterances are not seldom accompanied by heavy glossing in an introduction or in footnotes to explain that 'imitate', however, should not be understood here as 'imitate', but rather as 'represent' (or 'reflect', 'express', 'symbolise', or some other related expression, provided that it has no connotation of triviality, superficiality or concreteness).²¹

At least since the appearance of Hermann Koller's monograph on μῖμησις in 1954,²² it is no longer so self-evident that 'imitation' should be taken as the basic meaning of the word. In the footsteps of F.M. Cornford,²³ Koller clearly demonstrated that in many ancient texts, especially when artistic μῖμησις is concerned, μῖμησις cannot be rendered with 'imitation', but must be rendered with 'representation'. Translators of Aristotle's *Poetics* do not only increasingly acknowledge this fact, but have also started to act upon it. Their corresponding adjustment of the translation improves the intelligibility of this difficult work a great deal.²⁴

However, in the works of Plato the exact meaning of μῖμησις is much less obvious than in Aristotle's *Poetics*. Koller assumes that the word μῖμησις in antique writing was polysemic, that it had two primary meanings, namely a learned one, 'representation' (the one used by Aristotle in his *Poetics*), and a common one, '(trivial) imitation'. According to Koller, Plato played on this ambiguity and used the word as it suited him—at times as

her with "l'imitation des tyrans" (1981⁵ [1953]) *ad loc.* Likewise Richard Crawley: "mimicry of a despot" (1952, *ad loc.*); M.A. Schwartz (1986² [1964]) 50; Landmann (1960) 81. Such manoeuvres aptly illustrate the awkwardness of the translation 'imitation'.

¹⁴ *Rep.* III.400A5-B3 / Sicking (1983) 185.

¹⁵ *Phdr.* 251A3 / Robin (1954⁴ [1944]) 44.

¹⁶ *Plt.* 300C5-6 / Verdenius (1978 [1949]) 269.

¹⁷ Aristotle *Pol.* VIII.5.1340a18-b19 / Copleston (1962⁹ [1946]) 103.

¹⁸ Aristotle *Metaph.* V.14.1020b3-6 / Schwartz (1987³ [1970]) *ad loc.*

¹⁹ Aristotle *Poet.* 2.1448a17-8 / Gigon (1987² [1983]) 393; Telford (1961) 5.

²⁰ Strabo *Geogr.* 10.3.9(467) / Jones (1928) *ad loc.*

²¹ Butcher (1951⁴ [1894]) 122; Ross (1977¹⁰ [1923]) 276-90; Hardy (1979⁸ [1932]) 12; Copleston (1962⁹ [1946]) 101-3; and many others.

²² H. Koller (1954) *Die Mimesis in der Antike: Nachahmung, Darstellung, Ausdruck* (Bern). In 1980 Koller published an abridged version of his insights in the *Historisches Wörterbuch der Philosophie* of Ritter and Gründer.

²³ Cornford (1922).

²⁴ E.g. Van der Ben and Bremer (1988² [1986]); Janko (1987); Schomakers (2000). Stephen Halliwell (1995) retains the noun in transliteration ('mimesis'), but translates the verb as 'to represent'. For a theoretical exposition on the meaning of μῖμησις in Aristotle's *Poetics*, see Petersen 1992. For an analysis of the term 'representation' in art criticism, see Mooij 1998.

‘representation’, at other times as ‘(trivial) imitation’. Plato would do so on purpose, in order to manipulate the reader into a dislike of art: especially in his writings on art Plato would use μίμησις in its trivial sense, as mere imitation.

This theory of Koller, however valuable and original when it comes to the explanation of several difficult passages in Greek literature, to my mind needs substantial improvement.²⁵ It is true that, due to the lack of a modern equivalent of general application, we are forced to make use of different renderings of μίμησις, depending on the context, but from this it does not necessarily follow that the Greek word was ambiguous. To compare: the fact that the particle δέ depending on the context is rendered in English as ‘but’, ‘and’ or ‘then’ is no indication of its ambiguity either; when Greek writers use δέ, this definitely does not mean that they are being chaotic or misleading. Obviously the focal meaning of δέ has to be found at a more basic level; the word appears to be just a connective and not to indicate anything more than that two things are somehow related.

So, Koller is right that the English word ‘imitation’ does not cover every Greek use of μίμησις, but the solution that he proposes is needlessly complicated. I think that it is possible to be more parsimonious in our assumptions. Instead of assuming several basic meanings of μίμησις we can manage with just one. Since this meaning has to fit well with any Greek passage where μίμησις is found, it apparently cannot have an inherent connotation of outwardness. A connotation that it does have, on the other hand, is that of ‘image’: in the *Sophist* μίμησις is defined by Plato as εἰδωλα ποιεῖν—the production of images.²⁶ In other Greek texts, e.g. Aristotle’s *Poetics*, the connection of μίμησις and image is quite obvious too.²⁷ For want of a modern word that is completely identical in meaning with μίμησις, we have to resort to a paraphrase of some length to describe the focal meaning of the word, presumably something like ‘(re)presenting in a non-discursive, immediate, picturelike way’.

Taking this as the basic meaning of μίμησις still does not help us very much, though, unless we find adequate ways of translating the word in indi-

²⁵ I have gone into this in more detail in Kardaun (1993) 16-7, 24-5, 62-4, and *passim*. However, as I found out later, Joachim Dalfen had pointed out already as early as 1974 that the Greek understanding of μίμησις does not distinguish between ‘representation’ (‘Darstellung’) and ‘imitation’ (‘Nachahmung’), and that Koller’s thesis of two different meanings of μίμησις cannot be held. Dalfen (1974) 196; see also Wagner (1994) 241.

²⁶ *Soph.* 234B-C. Also *Soph.* 235B and 265A-B; *Rep.* X, 599D2 and 601B9; *Laws* II, 668A6 ff.; *Plt.* 306D and *passim*. It may be remarked that in the case of the sophist the image-producing takes place through language: the μίμησις of the sophist consists in the fact that he produces εἰδωλα λεγόμενα: he paints images in words (*Soph.* 234C6). See de Rijk (1986) 82.

²⁷ E.g. *Poet.* 25.1460b7-9: ‘Ἐπεὶ γὰρ ἐστὶ μιμητὴς ὁ ποιητής, ὥστερανεὶ ζωγράφος ἢ τις ἄλλος εἰκονοποιός. So, literature is like painting or any other image-producing art. Notwithstanding its use of words, literature is pictorial in the sense that it does not argue but presents images.

vidual cases. This is a matter of English. The English language seems to divide the semantic field of '(re)presenting in a picturelike way' roughly into the following three categories (perhaps more, but I think that for the present practical purposes three will do). It is important to keep in mind that these translation categories have nothing to do with the Greek language at all.²⁸

1. To μιμεῖσθαι unintentionally an abstract object may often be translated with 'REFLECT' ('mirror'; 'display'; 'be a copy of'; 'represent'; 'symbolise'; 'embody'). To give an example: in the *Politics*, after having discussed his ideas of a well-organised city-state, Aristotle declares: Μεμιμησθαι δὲ χρὴ τὴν εἰρημένην τάξιν καὶ τὰ περὶ τὴν χώραν—the arrangements of the country must reflect the above pattern as well.²⁹ (Note that the object of μίμησις is constituted not by the concrete arrangements concerning the city-state, but by their underlying τάξις.)

2. To μιμεῖσθαι intentionally a concrete object (e.g. a noise, or an animal, or a human being) may be translated neutrally with 'COPY' (or perhaps with 'imitate' in a neutral sense). When an essential kind of copying is meant—we have to infer this from the context—, then 'follow' or 'match' may be a good solution; when the copying takes place in a nonessential way we may render it with 'imitate' or 'ape'. To provide an example of each kind: Theognis remarks about certain people who ridicule him: μιμεῖσθαι δ' οὐδεὶς τῶν ἀσόφων δύναται.³⁰ Apparently he means to say that none of them comes up to his level; it is not that they cannot imitate him in his outward appearance or his idiosyncrasies—this they may actually have been doing—, but that they are unable to match him.³¹ On the other hand, when in a certain context μίμησις happens to be directed at superficial features only, we may well translate it with 'imitation': Xenophon makes Socrates explain

²⁸ I slightly disagree with Richard Janko's remark that: "The Greeks drew no clear distinction between imitation, copying, impersonation and representation—all these concepts were included in the word *mimesis*." Janko (1987) XV. First, the word μίμησις does not include those concepts; it is simply less specific than any rendering we have at our disposal—but perhaps Janko and I differ only in formulation here. Secondly, the fact that the Greeks did not express the above distinctions in a terminology comparable to ours does not, I think, imply that they did not have these distinctions, only that they sometimes—when they wished to be specific about the object of μιμεῖσθαι—needed a few extra words. A telling example of how to designate precisely 'imitation' in Greek is *Mem.* 1,7,2: 'τὰ ἔξω μιμεῖσθαι' (see below). To compare: the English language distinguishes between 'flesh' and 'meat', whereas the German language does not; 'Fleisch' covers both 'flesh that belongs to a living thing' and 'flesh that is meant as nourishment'. Obviously this linguistic detail cannot be taken as an indication that the German mind lacks sensitivity to the difference between flesh that is meant for food and flesh that is not.

²⁹ *Pol.* VII.11.1331b14-5.

³⁰ Theogn. 370.

³¹ Likewise, when some six centuries later St. Paul calls upon the Corinthians to be his followers, like he himself is a follower of Christ (μιμηταί μου γίνεσθε, καθὼς καὶ γὼ Χριστοῦ: I Cor. 11:1), he must have in mind an essential kind of following and not a mere imitation of exteriorities. For example, it is unlikely that St. Paul would have appreciated the Brian figure in Monty Python's *Life of Brian*.

what a bad flute-player should do who wants to be mistaken for a good one: ἄρ' οὐ τὰ ἔξω τῆς τέχνης μιμητέον τοὺς ἀγαθοὺς ἀνθρώπους; —shouldn't he try to imitate good players in the outward appearances of their art?³² Here the translation '(trivial) imitation' is absolutely appropriate. It has to be noticed, however, that the connotation of superficiality is brought about not by the word μιμητέον, but by the context: if μιμητέον by itself connoted 'bearing upon outward appearances', then the addition τὰ ἔξω τῆς τέχνης would be superfluous.

3. Finally, to μιμεῖσθαι intentionally an abstract object may often be translated aptly with 'REPRESENT' ('give shape to'; 'express'). Xenophon makes Socrates explain that artists should try to μιμεῖσθαι not only things seen, but also the character of the soul (τῆς ψυχῆς ἥθος).³³ It is evident that 'imitation' misses the point here altogether, and that something like 'represent' must be meant. The fact that Xenophon's Socrates seems to consider good art as a representation of something essential, and that he does not hesitate to use the word μίμησις in this connection, is not without significance for our understanding of Platonic art theory, since this theory is formulated for the most part by the Socrates figure too.

Returning to Plato, there is no indication that his linguistic conception of μίμησις is unique at all. In the dialogues we find exactly the same use of the word as in other Greek texts. Nowhere does μίμησις necessarily refer to just external or material aspects of something, or to use a more philosophical vocabulary, μίμησις in the dialogues does not necessarily refer to the concreta in their concrete ontic status; depending on the context μίμησις may reflect either essential or incidental characteristics of its object.³⁴

To translate μίμησις in the work of Plato we can make use of the same categories as above. We will provide one example of each.³⁵

1. In *Timaeus* 80B7-8 it is stated that harmonic sound constellations and movements by their reflection of the divine harmony (διὰ τὴν τῆς θείας ἁρμονίας μίμησιν) give pleasure to silly people, whereas to men who are wise they give a higher sort of delight. A divine harmony, of course, cannot be imitated.

2. In *Apology* 23C Socrates reveals one of the reasons why his fellow citizens want to get rid of him: promising young men with wealthy fathers and plenty of leisure have begun to follow him on their own accord and they

³² *Mem.* I,7,2.

³³ *Mem.* III,10. Xenophon uses μιμεῖσθαι in this passage several times as synonymous with ἀπεικάζειν. This is again an indication of the close connection of 'μίμησις' and 'image'.

³⁴ There is one exception: the word μιμητής (mimetic artist) is used by Plato in an exclusively negative way, to designate a bad kind of artist. However, this negative connotation is not a linguistic matter, but a consequence of Plato's theory 1) that there exists a kind of art which is at two removes from Truth—so-called 'mimetic' art—, and 2) that this kind of art is produced by a certain type of artist, the μιμητής or 'mimetic' artist. See below, notes 104 and 126.

³⁵ Many more examples are discussed in Kardaun (1993) 43-67.

often copy him (ἐμὲ μιμοῦνται) in that they too cross-examine so-called experts and expose them as ignorant. Clearly the young followers do not copy Socrates in a superficial way, since Socrates takes care to explain that it is precisely their success which makes them so annoying.

3. Finally I want to bring up a well-known passage of *Republic* X.³⁶ Here Socrates asks whether the μίμησις of painting is oriented towards the essence of its object or towards its appearances. This text is often quoted to illustrate that the word μίμησις means '(trivial) imitation', but evidently the traditional translation is impossible even here, since linguistically Socrates cannot possibly ask whether painting *imitates* the essence or the appearances of things; he must ask whether it *represents* the essence or the appearances, even if the answer is that painting is focused on appearances only and that this kind of art is therefore nothing but imitation.

To conclude, though μίμησις in some cases can be rendered '(trivial) imitation', '(trivial) imitation' is not the basic meaning of the word. This fact is of major importance to our subject, since the intrinsic connotation of concreteness which the term μίμησις is often supposed to have, and which is expressed in the often recurring rendering 'imitation', forms the cornerstone of the traditional belief that Plato rejects art merely in virtue of its being μίμησις. Of course, one may stretch the meaning of the traditional rendering 'imitation' to such an extent that it is practically synonymous with 'representation'. This is not uncommon.³⁷ In doing so one has to take into account, however, that one undermines the very foundation of the traditional belief that it is qua μίμησις that Plato considers art to be at two removes from ideal Reality. And besides, there are no reasonable grounds why we should translate μίμησις with 'imitation' when this translation requires the routine instruction that actually 'representation' is meant.³⁸

Thus some plain conclusions can be drawn: first, that it is unfounded to state that from the association of art with μίμησις, as was common in antiquity, it follows that at that time works of art were generally held to be imitations of the material, outward side of reality. (Such a conception of art may or may not have been popular, but this is not to be inferred from any intrinsic 'low' meaning of the word μίμησις.) Secondly, the word μίμησις has no inherent connotation of externality or concreteness even in Plato's writings on art. Therefore, though it is true that art is regarded by Plato as essentially mimetic, it cannot be this mimetic quality in itself which in his eyes

³⁶ *Rep.* X, 598B1-4.

³⁷ E.g. Verdenius (1983) 54 ff., where it is explicitly stated that for the ancient Greeks 'imitation', when applied to art, "could refer to things never heard or seen". Thomas Twining must have had this kind of practice in mind when he observed: "The word *imitation*, like many others, is used, sometimes in a strict and proper sense, and sometimes in a sense more or less extended and improper. Its application to poetry is chiefly of the latter kind." Twining (1965) 42.

³⁸ See above, note 21.

makes (nearly all) artistic products mere ‘imitation’. Apparently for works of art to become classified as ‘imitation’ something extra is needed.

It cannot be denied that in his ideal state Plato imposes some very severe restraints on artistic expression. Now that it has become clear that art’s mimetic nature—that is to say the fact that art operates in a fundamentally pictorial way—is not in itself objectionable to Plato, what reservations towards art does he have? And how are these reservations to be combined with the respect and admiration for poetry of which his work is full? I think that we have to depart, like W.K.C. Guthrie recommended,³⁹ from a distinction between artistic *μίμησις* that is at one remove from Reality, since it represents the Platonic Ideas directly, and artistic *μίμησις* that is at two removes from Reality, since it represents the concreta only in their concrete ontic status.

3. *Plato’s treatises on literature and music in the Republic*

Let us turn to what Plato tells us about art in his famous—perhaps better: notorious⁴⁰—treatises on the subject in books II–III and X of the *Republic*.⁴¹ Now that we have the means to translate *μίμησις* properly, we may hope to do more justice to the texts concerned than we have done heretofore.

The *Republic* examines the question ‘What is justice?’. Answering this question involves the construction of a hypothetical ‘just’ state, which is developed together with a blueprint of the ‘just’ soul.⁴² Once we possess knowledge of the structure of both the just state and the just soul, we may hope to come to knowledge of Justice itself.

The population of the just state—that is to say the best conceivable state, given the less-than-ideal practical situation that human nature has lost its original simplicity and innocence—is divided into three classes: a productive one, a military one, and a governmental one. Good government is a necessary condition for the state to participate in Justice. Such government is based on knowledge; therefore the state will have to be governed by its best intellectuals. (Actually, one philosopher-king will suffice, provided he has seen Truth.) In order to be effective, the government needs the help of military forces. Apart from being high-minded and physically fit, these should have a philosophical disposition and a thorough philosophical education. Only then will they be able to discern the true enemies of the state. Moreover, it is from the ranks of the warriors that the future rulers are to be selected, so a proper education of the military class is of the utmost importance to the just state.

³⁹ Guthrie (1989⁶ [1975]) 545–8.

⁴⁰ Paul Woodruff’s “Plato’s canards against poetry” may sound somewhat blunt, but summarises the general feeling well. Woodruff (1992) 83.

⁴¹ II,376E2–III,403C8 and X,595A1–608B10.

⁴² Perhaps the latter is somewhat more important than the former: see e.g. IV,443C9–D1.

Before the warriors can occupy themselves with philosophy in the strict sense, they need a preliminary cultural training. This is where art comes in: in the context of the *Republic* art is brought up as a useful means to mould young, pre-philosophical souls, in order that they may one day become receptive of Platonic philosophy.⁴³ It is important to notice that in the *Republic* Plato merely tries to determine the kind of art that is functional in the aforesaid education, a kind of secondary school, and that he is not talking about art as such, let alone unfolding a comprehensive art theory. (There *is* an underlying comprehensive theory, but it has to be garnered from a combination of passages of several dialogues, including the *Republic*.) The cultural education programme of the young warriors consists of the subjects of literature and music.

3.1 Books II and III of the Republic

Literature

In II,376E2-III,398B9 Plato discusses what kind of literature is likely to produce good warriors. He approaches his subject *ex negativo* in that he talks mainly about his reasons for prohibiting the greater part of contemporary works. At the same time he makes it clear that literature, once it is properly purged, is of great importance to the development and maintenance of the ideal state.

First the content of literary works is examined (II,376E2-III,392C5). Plato confines himself here to just a part of literature, namely to μῦθοι about the supernatural (gods, demi-gods, heroes,⁴⁴ the underworld); comments on literature concerning human conduct are postponed to a later moment.⁴⁵ It appears that most existing mythological stories—invented and composed by “Homer, Hesiod and the other poets” (II,377D4-5)—are unsuitable for young souls:⁴⁶ being neither καλοί nor ἀληθεῖς they tend to have a bad effect on public morals. Consequently, the subject-matter of this kind of literature will have to be supervised: only ‘beautiful’ myths, i.e. myths that represent the divine in a decent way, are to be accepted, since these are likely to enhance public morals. Generally speaking, ‘beautiful’ myths will at the same time be ‘true’.

The qualification ‘true’ needs some further explication. Naturally, Plato is aware of the fact that literary works are always fictitious (‘untrue’), but as

⁴³ Plato is very clear about this, e.g.: II,377A12-C4; II,378D7-E3; III,387C3-5; III,390A4; III,401B-2A4; IV,424C ff.; cf. *Laws* II,653 f.

⁴⁴ ἥρωες: the more than human, mythological heroes. Plato keeps emphasising their divine descent, e.g. III,391C ff.

⁴⁵ III,392A3-C4. This promise is kept in X,598D ff.

⁴⁶ Needless to say, art that is unsuitable for young warriors, who are not (yet) in the possession of philosophical wisdom, is inappropriate also as entertainment for the productive class; cf. X,595B5-7, where it is stated that a certain type of poetry causes mental damage to its hearers, insofar as they do not have an antidote in the form of knowledge of its real nature.

he sees it this does not necessarily prevent them being true in a higher sense:⁴⁷ the nature of the divine is of a perfect,⁴⁸ unchanging,⁴⁹ and unambiguous⁵⁰ goodness, and 'true' fiction represents it as such.⁵¹ Correspondingly, stories that portray the gods, their offspring, or the beyond in a negative way are a misrepresentation of Truth.⁵² For example, Homer's description of the hereafter as an altogether gloomy place is not only damaging to the young warrior's courage but also untrue,⁵³ the picture of Achilles or any other hero behaving in an uncontrolled way is a false one,⁵⁴ and least of all are poets to misrepresent (ἀνομοίως μιμήσασθαι) the highest of all gods by having him do or say unworthy things.⁵⁵ In other words, mythology seems to be considered by Plato as a poetic counterpart of metaphysics.⁵⁶ 'Beautiful' myths will in most cases at the same time be 'true', not in the sense of their being an exact copy of concrete reality, but in the sense of their representing something of the eternal Forms. Through 'correct' mythology the warriors are to develop already at an early age a favourable image of the world of Forms—hence the importance of supervising the mythological subject-matter of poetry.

In III,392C6 Plato moves on from the rules concerning the content of literature (ἄ λεκτέον) to the criteria regarding the form (ὡς λεκτέον).⁵⁷ He

⁴⁷ II,376E11-7E3; II,382C10-D3; *Laws* IV,713E3 f.

⁴⁸ II,379A7-80C10.

⁴⁹ II,380D1-1E7.

⁵⁰ II,381E8-3C7: the gods do not deceive us, either willingly or unwillingly.

⁵¹ II,379A5-83C7. As for examples, this section contains only negative ones, such as the mistaken Homeric picture of Zeus having two jars in his palace, one filled with noble fates, the other with doom (II,379D3-4). Somewhat further on in the *Republic*, however, Socrates brings up an old myth belonging to the traditional poetic repertoire, which he strongly wishes to be universally believed in the ideal state though it is not literally true, namely that all men are actually born from Mother Earth; they are to honour their mother, i.e. their native country, and to consider themselves as brothers. To some men, however, the god who made them added gold, whereas for the composition of others he used less precious kinds of metal; hence the state's natural hierarchy (III,414B8-5C7). And of course we may safely assume that Plato's many myths of his own, in which the gods always appear as the source of good things only—such as the myth of Er (X,614-21) or Plato's reconstruction of what happened before our time in the golden days of Cronos (*Plt.* 269-74; *Laws* IV,713 f.)—, convey Truth. For the relation between Platonic myth and Truth, see also Zeller (1859) 361-363.

⁵² Between the lines, the possibility of exceptions is left open, e.g. II,378A2-6. We will come to this later.

⁵³ III,386B10-C1. An adequate Platonic picture of the afterlife is presented in the myth of Er, at the very end of the *Republic* (X,614-end). This myth stresses the complete justice of the divine: souls will be punished or rewarded exactly according to what they deserve. Since there will be no unreasonable punishments or rewards, any misfortune is man's own responsibility; god is blameless.

⁵⁴ III,391D7-E1.

⁵⁵ III,388C2 f.

⁵⁶ Cf. Guthrie (1989⁶ [1975]) 365 and (1989⁵ [1978]) 179.

⁵⁷ By discussing both content and form Plato regards his treatment of literature in books II and III as exhaustive (III,392C7-8 and 398B7-8), *except* for the already mentioned directives with regard to non-mythological subject-matters (III,392A3-C5): these will be discussed in book X (598D7-602B11).

starts his inquiry into literary form with the observation that a story or plot (διήγησις) can be communicated in three ways: through simple narration (ἀπλῇ διηγήσει), through μίμησις (διὰ μιμήσεως), or through a mixture of both (δι' ἀμφοτέρων). He gives some examples: dithyrambic⁵⁸ poetry makes use only of non-mimetic, plain narration (ἄνευ μιμήσεως ἀπλῇ διήγησις); a literary genre that is entirely mimetic in its makeup is drama; epic poetry, lastly, illustrates the mixed composition mode. For example, those parts in the *Iliad* where Homer impersonates his characters by representing them in direct speech are composed in the mimetic mode, while the narrative parts are not.⁵⁹

Evidently, the mimetic mode has something to do with direct speech, or more generally with impersonation or acting. As Plato explains, to speak and behave with the voice or bodily gestures of someone else is to 'μιμεῖσθαι' this person, and this is what poets do with regard to the characters of drama and the major part⁶⁰ of epic: they do not straightforwardly tell us that Chrysis or Agamemnon did this or that, but communicate their character's doings through impersonation.⁶¹

Now, Gerald Else may well be right that Plato's use of μίμησις "as a designation of the dramatic method per se" must have been new to Plato's contemporaries.⁶² However, to take μίμησις in this section as identical in meaning with 'dramatic method', as Else and quite a few other scholars do,⁶³ is to take it in much too narrow a sense. As a matter of fact, Plato is not proposing a terminological innovation in the field of literary criticism here—as if 'mimetic' were a literary-technical term, from now on to be used instead of 'dramatic'. What he means to say in III,392C6-4C6 is that 'dramatic performance' is a mimetic way of communicating something: compared to 'simple narration' it adds an extra pictorial element to literary expression. The difference between simply recounting a plot in the third person and dramatising that plot through direct speech or on stage may be understood as follows: unlike philosophical treatises, a literary plot is pictorial to begin with—being μίμησις, it produces a picture⁶⁴ of something without

⁵⁸ Plato seems to have in mind the 'original' διθύραμβος: a narrative choral lyric on mythological subjects that had a regular antistrophic structure and was accompanied by instruments. To Plato's regret, contemporary dithyrambic poetry was developing, under the influence of 'modernist' composers, toward a less disciplined structure which gave greater importance to the musical element at the cost of the text.

⁵⁹ III,392E2-4C5.

⁶⁰ In III,393B2-5 Plato informs us that the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* are composed almost entirely in direct speech.

⁶¹ III,392D7-4B7.

⁶² Else 1986, 26-28.

⁶³ E.g. Eric Havelock speaks of a rather precise definition of 'μίμησις' as 'dramatic method of composition' and is somewhat annoyed to find that Plato apparently does not feel any obligation to adhere to it. (Havelock (1994⁷ [1963]) 21 and 24 f.) However, Plato is not defining 'μίμησις' but 'dramatic method' here.

⁶⁴ Note that pictures can be pictures in words; see above, note 26 and 27.

supplying the corresponding argumentation—, and to act out such a plot in direct speech or on stage is thus to produce a picture of a picture.

That the mimetic mode is little appreciated by Plato, is not astonishing. Depicting something is tantamount to making a statement about that something in an irrational manner, without properly discussing it. Pictures are subtle persuaders; they tend to get round one's rational defenses and sneak into one's mind by the back door. So much the more insidious is literature composed in the mimetic ('dramatic') mode: since it consists in producing pictures of pictures, it will be almost immune to reasonable analysis, and that makes it very difficult for its audience to escape its influence.

Still, when it comes to establishing rules with regard to the literary form, the mimetic mode is not Plato's primary concern. Plato does not criticise direct speech or acting *in se*. He makes it clear that insofar as poetry can be trusted to treat of honourable characters and themes, the young warriors are free to occupy themselves with it, both passively and actively, no matter in what mode it is written; with characters that are ethically superior to them they may by all means identify themselves.⁶⁵ The point that Plato wants to make in his discussion of the literary form is wider in scope, and more interesting, than just to proclaim a ban on dramatic performance.⁶⁶

This becomes clear in the second half of this discussion (III,394E-8B), where the three modes of composition reveal themselves—somewhat surprisingly—as the basic ingredients of two literary styles (εἶδη τῆς λέξεως),⁶⁷ and the question of the literary form is reformulated by Plato as a critical examination of these two styles.

It appears that the correct way to convey a literary plot is to do so in a predominantly narrative style, which contains little or no direct speech. This is the style of the true gentleman (ὁ τῷ ὄντι καλὸς κάγαθός).⁶⁸ Such a gentleman will rarely use direct speech, and if he does, it will be only to express proper things.⁶⁹

The alternative style, in which direct speech is predominant, uses all variations in mode and rhythm, sees no harm in representing all kinds of things, and will most likely be of a morally bad content. It is attractive to the masses, but pernicious to the soul, since it inspires effeminacy, pride, cowardice, madness, concupiscence, and the like.⁷⁰ What makes this kind of poetry unfit as an art form is the combination of its largely bad content and its penetrating style of presentation. That is why the warriors are to keep their hands off it. Though they have to learn about evil, they are not to empathise

⁶⁵ III,395C3-5 and 396C5-D1.

⁶⁶ III,394D.

⁶⁷ III,397B4.

⁶⁸ III,395B11-C1.

⁶⁹ III,396B10-E10.

⁷⁰ III,395C5-6A4; III,396D1-E2; III,397D7-8.

with it: analysing from a distance will do, or they will inevitably get carried away and become bad themselves.⁷¹

So the three composition modes that had been hitherto distinguished have lost their relevance for the further discussion. They are replaced by two opposite literary styles, a 'decent' and an 'offensive' one.

Now, it is important to notice that the kind of literature that Plato wants to ban includes more than just works that are entirely written in the 'offensive' style: literature that is partly 'decent' and partly 'offensive' is explicitly forbidden too. Plato accepts none but completely 'decent' literature in his city.⁷² Apparently he wants to err on the side of caution with his art policy, approving only of such literature as is absolutely certain to do no harm to its audience. In plain words: not only is drama excluded from Plato's city, but epic as well. Though to a lesser extent than drama, epic is pleasant (ῥῆύς) to the masses too.⁷³ Small wonder, since considerable parts of it are written in the 'offensive' style: not only does epic contain too much direct speech,⁷⁴ but it also makes use of it at the wrong moments.⁷⁵ And to make things worse: from Plato's many negative examples of epic poetry in books II and X we may infer that its purely narrative parts are not always edifying either.⁷⁶ All in all, though epic occasionally contains decent lines,⁷⁷ when it comes to the question whether or not it should be officially released for publication, the answer is 'no'. Being not wholly 'decent', epic is classed in Plato's censoring programme together with 'offensive' poetry.

So, as far as we know at this stage of our reading of the *Republic*, in the ideal state at least two types of literature are prohibited: 1) all literature that is in a higher sense untrue—i.e. mythological literature that fails to convince its audience of the beauty, perfection and fundamental goodness of the di-

⁷¹ III,395C-6A. Cf. X,606A-D.

⁷² III,397D1-5.

⁷³ III,397D6-8.

⁷⁴ III,393B2-5 and III,396E4-8.

⁷⁵ In III,394D Plato asks what kind of things may be expressed in direct speech, and the answer is: only such elements of a subject-matter as are decent (III,396C f.); Homer, on the other hand, expresses anything in direct speech (III,391A *et passim*).

⁷⁶ In *Laws* II,658 f. Plato is as hostile as ever towards drama—which, as he contemptuously informs us, pleases children, women, adolescents and the masses (cf. *Gorg.* 502B-D)—, but he expresses a more favourable opinion of epic: if rhapsodists render the *Iliad*, the *Odyssey*, or something of Hesiod in a beautiful way (καλῶς), such recitations will be to the taste of the older gentlemen, who are the ones in society with the best judgement. Some lines further down Plato states that it is imperative that literature represents characters better than those of the average audience, and we may infer that drama does not meet this standard, whereas epic does, provided that it is rendered correctly (perhaps with less direct speech than usual and with a well-balanced distribution of emotion at the right moments only, as is suggested in *Rep.* III,393D-4A and 396C-7E). I think we have to live with the conclusion that epic occupies a middle position in Plato's system: part of it is 'offensive', part is 'decent', and depending on the context Plato may focus his attention on either aspect.

⁷⁷ Minor fragments of Homer are not seldom cited with approval by Plato, even in the *Republic*. E.g. III,389E; III,390D; VI,501B6-7 *et passim*.

vine—, and 2) all literature that is (in part or completely) ‘offensive’ in that it contains more than a minimum of direct speech and uses it indiscriminately to portray all kinds of topics, i.e. that fails to present suspect, or even bad, subject-matters in a sufficiently narrative, distant way. Literature that suffers from either defect is likely to do damage to the soul of the warriors-to-be, and hence to harm society as a whole.

Music

In III,398C1-402A4 Plato formulates his directions regarding the musical components of literature, namely melody and rhythm. Against the developments of his time, Plato wanted to revive the tradition of the old choric education, in which literature and music had not yet differentiated into independent art forms, but were practised and taught together under the name μουσική (‘literary culture’).⁷⁸ A characteristic feature of choric education—and in general of choric art (ἡ χορική Μοῦσα)—was that melody and rhythm were supposed to be subservient to the words, and not the other way round.

That music should be composed in service of a text,⁷⁹ is exactly what Plato believes too.⁸⁰ Contemporary music, which had become emancipated from its original subordinate position into one of relative autonomy, is so much as detested by Plato,⁸¹ and—as we shall see—for good reasons from his point of view.

Plato’s rules with regard to music are twofold. First, melodies and rhythms are to be μιμήματα only of what is proper. For example, Plato seems to consider the Dorian and the Phrygian scales as politically correct, since they express courage and temperance respectively. Musical compositions that express a wrong mental attitude are forbidden: in the ideal city there is no room for Ionian or Lydian scales (too lachrymose, soft, and frivolous), modern instruments (too versatile), or complicated rhythms (may nourish unruly passion).

Second, music has to be embedded in a kind of *Gesamtkunstwerk*, under the supremacy of an officially approved text. Music without words (ἄνευ λόγου ῥυθμός τε καὶ ἁρμονία)⁸² is altogether prohibited. This we may

⁷⁸ For a reconstruction of the pre-Platonic choric education, as well as Plato’s innovations in this field, see de Rijk 1965, 45-67.

⁷⁹ Not any text, obviously, but a text that meets the previously established standards with regard to content and form of literature (III,398D4-6).

⁸⁰ III,398D8-9; III,399E11-400A2; III,400D1-5. Cf. *Laws* II,661C6-8.

⁸¹ In *Laws* II,669E5-70A2 he calls it ἀμουσία καὶ θαυματουργία: uninspired trickery. Cf. X,598A-D where the mimetic poet is compared in much the same way with a juggler (γόης), who produces not images of Truth, but mere images of φαντάσματα.

⁸² *Laws* II,669E2.

easily understand. Like poetry, music is essentially picturelike;⁸³ it influences its audience in an irrational, direct manner.⁸⁴ Without verbal accompaniment, music is practically inaccessible to reason: unless it is properly controlled by a text, it is very difficult to fathom what it represents or what it may arouse in its listeners.⁸⁵

In short, though potentially useful, music is a dangerous artistic medium. Thanks to its directness, its effects are either very good or very bad; music that does not contribute greatly to its audience's morality, will spoil it thoroughly.⁸⁶ Plato sees the function of music as helping to bring edifying messages of 'true' texts into relief.⁸⁷ If it does this, it is particularly esteemed: more than anything else, a proper musical education prepares young people for a life of reason.⁸⁸ Its direct influence, once it is controlled and recognised as safe, makes music an even more valuable element in the Platonic education system than if it were less direct.

It is interesting in this connection that Aristotle, too, describes music as a particularly penetrating art form. In melodies and rhythms there are contained *μυήματα* (or *ὁμοιώματα*) of moods and characters; these pertain to the soul of the listener without appealing to any other significative system than themselves. In other words: music expresses moods and characters in a very immediate way; there is no conceptual buffer between musical expression and the soul of the listener. This makes music a very useful means of education of the young: provided that it is 'correct', music encourages the development of virtue.⁸⁹

3.2 *Book X of the Republic*

In book X of the *Republic*—after having discussed in the intermediate books among other things the structure of the human soul (in connection of course with the different stages of cognition and the theory of Forms)—, Plato comes back to his previous discussion of literature. He declares himself satisfied with his earlier decision to ban so-called 'mimetic' poetry from his ideal city: 'mimetic' poetry causes mental damage to non-philosophical audiences.⁹⁰

It is of major importance to realise that Plato's treatment of poetry in book X concerns poetry not in general, but only insofar as it is 'mimetic',

⁸³ In *Laws* II,668B10-C1 all art, including music, is called 'μίμησις τε καὶ ἀπεικασία', and in III,398C1-402A4 modes and rhythms are systematically called 'μυήματα' of certain mentalities.

⁸⁴ E.g. IV,424B-E.

⁸⁵ *Laws* II,669D5-E4.

⁸⁶ E.g. IV,424C-5A.

⁸⁷ In the same way as the verbal aspect (ὁ λόγος) of the literary composition has to be modelled after the soul, music has to follow the sense of the words (III,400D-1D).

⁸⁸ III,401D5-2A6.

⁸⁹ *Pol.* VIII.5.1339b11-40b19. See also Kardaun 1993, 40 f.

⁹⁰ X,595A1-B7.

that is to say the 'wrong' kind of poetry as described in book III, in practice drama and epic. It appears to me that there can be no doubt that the discussion in book X links up with the last part of the earlier discussion of literature:⁹¹ unless we deliberately disregard Plato's intentions, it is clear that his argumentation in book X must still be based upon the same dichotomy between 'decent' and 'offensive' forms of poetry that he had established before, and that it is the latter kind of poetry which he here attacks;⁹² time and again Plato describes the object of his criticism in book X in a limiting terminology, ranging from αὐτῆς (sc. ποιήσεως) ὄση μιμητικῆς⁹³ to ἡ πρὸς ἡδονὴν ποιητικὴ καὶ ἡ μίμησις.⁹⁴ Likewise, when he mentions the poets whom he wants to expel, he keeps referring to them in a restrictive manner,⁹⁵ such as 'Ομήρου ἢ ἄλλου τινὸς τῶν τραγωδοποιῶν⁹⁶ or simply ὁ δὴ μιμητικὸς ποιητής.⁹⁷

That book X's 'mimetic' poetry and the 'offensive' style in book III are in fact identical is the more evident since they denote the same two poetic genres. Plato directs his attack in book X systematically against drama and epic. (Actually he treats these genres as if they were one and the same, e.g. he speaks about 'those who attempt tragic poetry, whether in iambs or in epic verse',⁹⁸ and Homer is brought up quite a few times in a negative way as 'the captain of tragedy'.⁹⁹) This is in line with the discussion in book III,

⁹¹ III,392C6-8B9. 'Ugly' mythology, which was censured in the first part of that discussion (II,376E2-III,392C5), is not at stake any more in book X. Apparently it is not 'mimetic' in Plato's eyes, at least not *qualitate qua*. The difference between 'ugly' mythological literature and 'mimetic' literature is, I think, that the former merely offers an undesirable picture of Reality, whereas the latter has the (extra) formal disadvantage of pertaining to Reality in a doubly picturelike way (see below).

⁹² Exactly *how* 'mimetic' poetry exerts its pernicious influence, that it springs from, as well as appeals to, the least rational element of the soul, Plato could not explain before the structure of the soul was disclosed. That is why the subject is treated only now (and hence his remark in X,595A5-B8).

⁹³ X,595A5.

⁹⁴ X,607C4-5. It seems to me that this hendiadys must be rendered not 'poetic mimesis designed for pleasure', as is proposed by Stephen Halliwell (1993² [1988]) 69/155; cf. Janaway (1995) 131, but something like 'poetry designed for pleasure, mimetic poetry that is'.

⁹⁵ Admittedly there is one section where Plato seems to attack all poets alike (X,598D7-602B11). However, this does not affect the possibility of the existence of good poets and poetry, since in this section Plato confines himself to a special subcategory of poetry, namely to (uninspired) poetry concerning human conduct. When it comes to practical rules concerning human conduct, Homer—or any other poet for that matter—is a misleading source of information. Since he has neither knowledge nor correct opinion of Virtue, he merely produces a (bad) picture of concrete behaviour. Naturally such a picture contains practically no information about Virtue itself. We will come to this section in a minute.

⁹⁶ X,605C11.

⁹⁷ X,605A2 and B7. It is worth noting that Stephanus translates the adjective 'μιμητικός' in this connection as 'gesticularius' (*Thesaurus Graecae linguae*, 1071, Paris 1842-1846).

⁹⁸ X,602B8-10: τοὺς τε τῆς τραγικῆς ποιήσεως ἀπτομένους ἐν ἱαμβείοις καὶ ἐν ἐπεσι.

⁹⁹ X,595B10-C2; 598D7-8; 605C11; 607A2-3. It should be noted that the fact that Plato apparently looks upon Homer as the primary source of 'mimetic' poetry does not exclude that Homer in Plato's eyes produced some good poetry too.

where drama and epic together formed the target of Plato's incrimination of poetry too: as we may recall, drama was regarded as entirely 'offensive' in style; epic—as it adopted the 'offensive' style only in part—, was less bad, but this fact did not protect it against being censured: it was treated on the same level as drama, that is to say it was banished altogether too.¹⁰⁰

The possibility, finally, that Plato uses the expressions 'mimetic poetry' and 'mimetic poet' in a tautological way is no option, since at the end of the discussion in book X Plato summarises his censoring policy by restating that the kind of literature that he wants to eliminate is 'pleasure-indulging literature, whether in the form of epic or drama',¹⁰¹ and he concludes with the information that there is only one type of literature that he will admit in his city, namely 'hymns to the gods and praises of good men'.¹⁰² So, obviously not all poetry is 'mimetic': as all 'mimetic' poetry was unequivocally and completely banned,¹⁰³ the hymns and praises that Plato brings up in X,607A as examples of 'good' literature must be classified as 'non-mimetic'.

Put otherwise: Plato's use of the term *μίμησις* in literature is complicated: all literature is mimetic—meaning that the essence of literature consists in its representing something in a non-discursive, immediate, picturelike way—, but we nonetheless have to distinguish between 'non-mimetic' literature, which is simply mimetic, and so-called 'mimetic' literature, which is mimetic in a double sense, namely both as literature and in style.¹⁰⁴

Naturally two questions now arise: what exactly is 'mimetic' literature, philosophically speaking? And secondly: what makes this kind of literature a dangerous art form?

Plato begins his answer by examining a less complex matter first. He has Socrates ask: *Μίμησιν ὅλως ἔχουσιν ἄν μοι εἰπεῖν ὅτι ποτ' ἐστίν?*¹⁰⁵ The answer to this smaller question is illustrated by an analogy. Plato compares three kinds of beds: the ideal Bed made by God, a concrete bed made by a carpenter, and a painting of that same concrete bed made by a painter.¹⁰⁶ The

¹⁰⁰ III,397D1-5 and see above.

¹⁰¹ *τὴν ἡδυσμένην Μοῦσαν ... ἐν μέλεσιν ἢ ἔπεσιν* (X,607A5-6).

¹⁰² *ὕμνους θεοῖς καὶ ἐγκώμια τοῖς ἀγαθοῖς* (X,607A4).

¹⁰³ X,595A5-6.

¹⁰⁴ There is one word within the semantic field of *μίμησις* which for Plato in itself connotes 'mimetic' literature—or generally 'mimetic' art—in the sense just described, namely *μιμητής*. Unlike *μίμησις*, *μιμητής* has an intrinsic negative connotation in Plato's work (e.g. X,599D3-4). This is not to be wondered, as *μιμητής* is connected closely with professional actors and dramatists (e.g. Aristotle *Poet.* 24.1460a5-11), and drama is the most prominent 'mimetic' art that Plato wants to proscribe. *Μιμητής* is used quite often by Plato to designate the 'mimetic' poet or artist, but may also refer to sophists or other impostors (e.g. *Soph.* 268C1). See also Kardaun (1993) 21, 56 f. and 63.

¹⁰⁵ X,595C7.

¹⁰⁶ As Guthrie remarks, the analogy of the three beds is not to be taken too literally. For example, the Platonic Forms are not—and cannot be—created, even by God. Guthrie (1989⁶ [1975]) 548 f.

thrust of this analogy is that—within the Platonic system—μίμησις is always one step below what it represents. Concrete beds are reproductions in matter of the ideal Bed, and for good Platonic reasons they are not as real as their Paradigm. What the painter does is produce nothing but a picture of the outward appearance of one of the many possible concrete beds, and only as seen from a certain perspective. So, ontologically speaking the painted bed is of very little value. Thereupon Plato informs us that the ‘mimetic’ artist¹⁰⁷ does precisely the same thing as the painter in the analogy,¹⁰⁸ namely showing us merely inessential aspects of the concrete world. In other words, ‘mimetic’ art, including ‘mimetic’ poetry, is directed not towards the Forms but towards the concreta in their lowest appearance. The μίμησις of the ‘mimetic’ artist copies nothing but φαντάσματα. ‘Mimetic’ artists and their art are at two removes¹⁰⁹ from Truth.¹¹⁰

In the next section¹¹¹ Plato keeps his earlier promise¹¹² to discuss poetry concerning human conduct. Epic and tragic poets are again the main butt of Plato’s criticism,¹¹³ but the accusations in this section apply to a lesser extent to poets in general as well.¹¹⁴ The central statement is that insofar as poets (whether ‘mimetic’ or not) in their compositions attempt to give us concrete advice about how to behave, their work is of no value, and even dangerous.

Plato here attacks the poet as the alleged educator of Greek society. Since poets have neither knowledge of the Forms nor right belief, how can they correctly counsel us about how to conduct our lives? What they tell us with regard to practical (e.g. medical) matters is worthless,¹¹⁵ and their judgement in moral affairs (e.g. in the field of politics or education) is positively damaging. If Homer were not at second but at one remove from Truth, he would be able to judge what makes men better or worse in private or in public life,¹¹⁶ but in fact he has no idea whatsoever of Virtue—or of any other of

¹⁰⁷ X,597E6-8: ὁ τραγωδοποιός, εἴπερ μιμητής ἐστι ... καὶ πάντες οἱ ἄλλοι μιμηταί—the tragedian, if (or: since) he is a mimetic artist ... and all the other mimetic artists. Whether or not Plato thinks that all tragedians are fundamentally mimetic in character is unclear. Besides the word εἴπερ in the text cited above there are also some other indications which suggest that he does not. However, this question is of little importance to Platonic art theory: Plato proposes a philosophical theory of what ‘mimetic’ art is and why he is against it; exactly what artist or which work of art is not to his liking, is less relevant in this respect.

¹⁰⁸ There are suggestions in the *Republic* that painting is not necessarily trivial, e.g. V,472D.

¹⁰⁹ Literally the text has ‘at third remove’ (X,597E3-8); this is because of the Greeks’ inclusive counting.

¹¹⁰ X,595C7-8D6.

¹¹¹ X,598D7-602B11.

¹¹² III,392C.

¹¹³ X,598D7-8 and 602B8-10.

¹¹⁴ X,599B9-C1; 600E4-6; 601A4-6.

¹¹⁵ X,599B9-C6.

¹¹⁶ And even if he were at one remove, Plato suggests (X,599D4), he would not be the best kind of public educator. From X,601C10-2A1 we may infer—in my own words—that this is

the Forms for that matter—, and he produces merely images of inessential facets of concrete behaviour.¹¹⁷

Now it has to be remembered that anything that comes from the gods is necessarily flawless,¹¹⁸ and Plato's accusation that poets exert a bad influence on public morals because they have neither knowledge nor even correct belief of what virtuous behaviour amounts to, implies that it is Plato's opinion that most contemporary literature about human behaviour does not spring from divine inspiration.¹¹⁹ In fact, 'mimetic' art, since it is at second remove from Reality, cannot originate from the Muse at all. Logically speaking, it has to be categorised as 'ἄμουσία', just as Plato categorised 'music without words'.¹²⁰ Put otherwise, not everything composed by poets is a product of divine inspiration; poets may sometimes create literary works wholly or partly on their own initiative.¹²¹ Indeed, it would be surprising if the Muse cared to inform us—through the poet as her spokesman—about something as trivial as shoemaking.¹²² However, it is not a matter of principle that literature about concrete behaviour should be at two removes from Reality. Provided it is edifying, Plato seems to appreciate this kind of literature.¹²³ And the 'praises of good men' which Plato recommends as good literature¹²⁴ indicate the same: a person may well feature as a literary subject-matter, but on the condition that something of the eternal Forms shines through.

The fact that not all literary works are (entirely) of divine origin is the reason the average poet's lack of knowledge poses a problem with respect to the moral implications of his art.¹²⁵ Poets—all poets—are mistaken as to what their compositions are about. The 'mimetic' poet, who merely creates

because correct directions given on the ground of right belief, i.e. given by chance, are less good than if the same directions are given based upon real knowledge.

¹¹⁷ X,599C6-600E3.

¹¹⁸ E.g. *Rep.* II,379A5-83C7; *Phdr.* 242E2-3; *Laws* II,669C1-70A3.

¹¹⁹ That (real) poetry originates directly from the Muse is an often recurring theme in Plato's work; see *Ion* 533D-7D; *Apol.* 21B-3C; *Meno* 99; *Phdr.* 244-5; *Laws* III,682A3-5.

¹²⁰ *Laws* II,669E5-70A2. Cf. *Laws* III,700D-1A, and see above, note 81.

¹²¹ Guthrie takes the same view (1989⁶ [1975], 426).

¹²² X,601A.

¹²³ III,392B5-6.

¹²⁴ X,607A4.

¹²⁵ Plato does not demand, though, that artists should possess knowledge or even right belief. (This is a widespread misapprehension: e.g. Guthrie (1989⁶ [1975]) 547 f.; Else (1986) 44-6.) Plato draws a clear line between the inspiration of the poet and of the philosopher (*Phdr.* 244A-52C). Poets should produce poetry, and philosophers philosophy, and neither should try to overstep the line between them (*Phdr.* 245A combined with *Phd.* 61B and *Rep.* II,378E-9A). It would not only be useless, but also superfluous to demand a philosophical attitude of poets: precisely to make clear that poetry is independent from any form of τέχνη, god made the very worst of all poets compose perhaps the most beautiful paean ever (*Ion* 534D-E). Doubtless Plato opines that—good, non-mimetic—poets should be given the opportunity of following their inspiration, since otherwise the ideal city will have no poetry of value at all. In case they create something against the law it is the philosopher's responsibility to see to it that it is not made public (*Rep.* II,377B-C; *Laws* IX,858D-9A).

pictures of inessential aspects of the concrete world, is such a shallow figure that he does not even possess right belief. His art is morally and ontologically bad, and its impact on society deleterious. The 'non-mimetic' poet, on the other hand, may under influence of the Muse temporarily possess right belief and represent the world in its essential aspects—thus producing indirectly and unknowingly a picture of (some aspects of) the Forms—, but as soon as his inspiration fades away, he is his own insignificant self once again.¹²⁶ After sobering down, he has to put together the probably fragmentary, oracle-like, information sent to him by the Muse.¹²⁷ This putting together is his own doing, and here he may well slip up, especially when he intersperses his personal comments as to the moral implications of the events that he is describing. That is why poetry, whether 'mimetic' or not, does not offer us reliable information of how to become a better person.¹²⁸ Of course this warning applies especially to the morally relevant content of the works of the 'mimetic' poet, since it is he who suffers from ignorance to the highest degree.¹²⁹

We have come to the last section¹³⁰ of the discussion why 'mimetic' poetry was rightly expelled from the city. First Plato recapitulates that 'mimetic' poetry is at second remove from Truth, since it only copies concrete reality as it appears. Appearances of things are deceptive, e.g. a straight object will look bent when partly immersed in water; if it were not for the reasonable element in us, we would be mistaken as to what the object is really like. Next, Plato states that 'mimetic' poetry allies itself not with reason but with the lowest part of the soul. It arises from, and appeals to, the irrational element in man. By encouraging violence and uncontrolled emotions 'mimetic' poetry subverts our psyche and obscures our relation to Truth. Plato calls it

¹²⁶ Still, when it comes to understanding, the normal, non-mimetic, poet is somewhat better off than the mimetic artist. See *Phdr.* 248E1-2, where in the hierarchy of cognition the (normal) poet occupies the sixth place—one place above the craftsman—, whereas the sophist is situated on the eighth position—one place below the craftsman. Now the sophist is explicitly identified by Plato as a μιμητής (*Soph.* 268B10-C4). This is because he is not only an ignoramus, but a pretender as well; like the tragedian he makes it his profession to deliberately deceive the masses. Such conduct is morally bad, and hence especially unenlightened. Thus the sophist understands less than an honest craftsman. This is in accordance with *Rep.* X, 597D-E, where the 'mimetic' artist with regard to his level of cognition was placed below the craftsman too. For a different interpretation of the ranking in the *Phaedrus*, see Nussbaum (1986) 225 f. For an explanation as to why the mimetic artist and the sophist are so closely connected see Welsch (1983) 230-7.

¹²⁷ Cf. *Phdr.* 278D8-E2, where Plato informs us that poets spend a lot of energy in the exact phrasing of their work, by twisting, pasting together, and pulling apart the sentences over and over again.

¹²⁸ Unlike 'mimetic' poetry, 'non-mimetic' poetry may *become* morally reliable, namely when it is properly purged and completed with the right kind of moral comment; this is the philosophers task.

¹²⁹ X, 602A3-B10.

¹³⁰ X, 602C1-8B10.

the weightiest charge against 'mimetic' poetry that it has a power to corrupt, with very few exceptions, even decent men.

Indeed, the immense subversive power which in Plato's eyes 'mimetic' poetry possesses must be the main reason why he reopened in book X the earlier discussion of 'mimetic' art. For Plato the correct answer to the question of what is Justice—the overall subject of the investigation in the *Republic*—, is inextricably bound up with proving that justice pays.¹³¹ In accordance, book X—the last book of the *Republic*—stresses the importance of possessing a just soul; that is why it ends with the myth of Er, about the punishments and rewards that await the just and the unjust man respectively. 'Mimetic' art is a major danger in this respect. To begin with, it is at two removes from Reality, so that it keeps us from Truth.¹³² Secondly, the 'mimetic' poet's low stage of cognition—something that to a lesser degree applies to the 'non-mimetic' poet as well—makes his moral conclusions and recommendations all wrong.¹³³ And last but not least, 'mimetic' poetry sides with the lowest element in our souls and reinforces it, so that we risk losing control of our psyche.¹³⁴ In sum, 'mimetic' poetry is not only almost entirely out of touch with Truth, but positively dangerous. Therefore it is excluded from Plato's commonwealth from the outset. 'Mimetic' poetry is forbidden, unless its defenders can prove that apart from being pleasant it is beneficial to the state and to the life of the individual. The only type of literature that Plato plans to admit in his city consists of the hymns to the gods and praises of good men mentioned above.

It may be useful to visualise how the Platonic system works by recourse to an example.¹³⁵ According to the doctrine of Forms there is only one paradigmatic Form 'Virtue', but there exist many copies of it, consisting in e.g. virtuous acts or virtuous persons. There is no great risk in assuming that Socrates is regarded by Plato as a fairly successful copy of the eternal Form Virtue. (In fact, this follows implicitly from a passage in the *Republic*:¹³⁶ true philosophers occupy themselves with what is ordered and reasonable,

¹³¹ See e.g. II,367B-E; III,392C; IV,427D.

¹³² X,595C7-8D6.

¹³³ X,598D7-602B11.

¹³⁴ X,602C1-8B10.

¹³⁵ This example is constructed by analogy to *Soph.* 267A5-E2, where Plato treats the difference between the true philosopher (ὁ σοφός) and the would-be philosopher (ὁ σοφιστής). To appear wise, the latter performs an act: he misleadingly copies the external behaviour of the former. Therefore he is called a μῦητής (a mere actor or 'mimetic' artist). This may be contrasted with *Apol.* 23C, where young followers of Socrates apparently try to copy him in an essential way, namely in his search for wisdom. See above, p. 141.

¹³⁶ VI,500B-D. Cf. *Phdr.* 249C5-6 where it is stated 1) that the soul of the philosopher, by remembering the Forms, dwells as much as possible in the neighbourhood of Reality, and 2) that god's divinity is caused precisely by being near to Reality.

i.e. the Forms, and endeavour to become like them.¹³⁷ In this way the true philosopher will become as ordered and divine¹³⁸ as is possible for a human being.) Now, if an artist is seized by the right inspiration, he may perhaps represent Socrates through a hymn, praising Socrates' virtuous qualities as they really are. In that case, though he is not aware of it, he is representing Virtue itself through its instantiation in Socrates (as Plato himself, of course, focuses most deliberately on ideal Virtue in his philosophical representation of the Socrates figure in the dialogues). Such a type of poem contains Truth and may well be useful in society. On the other hand, should an artist allow himself the liberty—as Aristophanes did in the *Clouds*—of representing Socrates on stage, in his outward behaviour and with his individual idiosyncracies, then this kind of art has to be considered as being at second remove from Reality, since in that case Socrates is represented in an inessential way, namely in his lowest appearance and only insofar as he is *not* an instance of Virtue. Thus, this kind of poetry does not represent the eternal Form 'Virtue'; it is merely 'imitation', that is to say a (bad, nonessential)¹³⁹ copy of one of the many instantiations of Virtue. At the same time, by focusing on the wrong aspects of concrete reality and making a spectacle out of them, such performances reinforce the irrational element in us.

To recapitulate: all poetry is mimetic, but some poetic products are more mimetic than others. So-called 'mimetic' poetry is at second remove from Reality, relaxes our self-control, and sneaks its way into our minds by its treacherous methods. 'Mimetic' poetry is categorically forbidden in Plato's ideal state. In practice, 'mimetic' poetry is identified by Plato with drama and parts of epic, whereby for safety's (or perhaps: convenience's) sake not only drama, but also epic is forbidden in its entirety.

This seems understandable enough. However, to make things complicated, even if artists happen to produce art that is at one remove from ideal Reality, art that reveals Truth with a capital initial, these works must be strictly and severely censored in Plato's ideal state (note: not categorically forbidden, but still put under severe restrictions). For example, even if Hesi-

¹³⁷ VI,500C5: ταῦτα μιμεῖσθαι τε καὶ ὅτι μάλιστα ἀφομοιοῦσθαι. Cf. *Tim.* 50C5 and 51A2 where Plato designates the realities of the physical world as μιμήματα and ἀφομοιώματα of the Forms respectively.

¹³⁸ VI,500C9-D1: κόσμιός τε καὶ θεῖος.

¹³⁹ Plato would not have gone against his own theoretical system had he recognised the possibility of a correct representation of good characters on stage, but in fact he does not, or at any rate he seems to consider it highly improbable that anything worthwhile may ever result from a theatre performance; see X,604E1-6. I have always found it not philosophically inconsistent but psychologically remarkable that Plato turns with such vehemence against dramatic poetry. In Kardaun 1997 I have tried—in line with Martha C. Nussbaum's work in this field—to formulate a depth-psychological explanation of the fact that Plato develops a theory that disqualifies precisely drama, including the 'dramatic' parts of epic, *a priori* as morally bad, trivial, and untrue. In brief: 1) more than any other Greek art form, drama offers (implicit) insights that are compensatory to the Platonic conception of man as an autonomous rational being, and 2) Platonic philosophy is allergic to being compensated.

od's stories about what Cronos did to his father Uranos, or Zeus to his father Cronos, were true, such artistic products would be something to keep concealed from the public.¹⁴⁰ For what reason?

4. *The Muse's tripod*

The answer to this question is well illustrated by a famous passage from the *Laws*. In this dialogue the Athenian philosopher, who leads the discussion and who is generally regarded to act as Plato's mouthpiece, informs us

that when a poet takes his seat on the Muse's tripod, his judgement takes leave of him; like a fountain he allows to flow out freely whatever comes in (ὅτι ποιητής, ὁπότεν ἐν τῷ τρίποδι τῆς Μούσης καθίζηται, τότε οὐκ ἔμφρων ἐστίν, οἷον δὲ κρήνη τις τὸ ἐπιὸν ῥεῖν ἐτοίμως ἔῃ), and his art being μίμησις, he must often contradict his own utterances when producing men of opposite dispositions, without knowing whether these or the other things of what he has said are true (καὶ τῆς τέχνης οὐσης μιμήσεως ἀναγκάζεται, ἐναντίως ἀλλήλοις ἀνθρώπους ποιῶν διατιθεμένους, ἐναντία λέγειν αὐτῷ πολλάκις, οἶδεν δὲ οὐτ' εἰ ταῦτα οὐτ' εἰ θάτερα ἀληθῆ τῶν λεγομένων). But this is not what the legislator should do with regard to the law, giving two accounts of one thing; he must always give one account of one thing (τῷ δὲ νομοθέτῃ τοῦτο οὐκ ἔστι ποιεῖν ἐν τῷ νόμῳ, δύο περὶ ἐνός, ἀλλ' ἓν αὖ περὶ ἐνός ἀεὶ δεῖ λόγον ἀποφαίνεσθαι).¹⁴¹

It has often been suggested that Plato simply had something against artists and that he is just being unpleasant towards them again here, accusing them of inconsistency for no particular reason; but if we read this short passage in its context and keep in mind that μίμησις means 'representation', it makes perfect sense. The major part of the *Laws* is—unsurprisingly—about law-giving. Plato is explaining here what kind of laws the philosopher-legislator should issue. Well, the legislator should *not* issue laws in the way in which a poet produces poems: laws should be plain and unambiguous, so that they cannot be misunderstood, whereas literary products apparently possess puzzling qualities which according to Plato make them unfit for uncensored distribution.

At first sight it seems somewhat surprising that Plato should want to censor something that originates so evidently from the Muse. There can be no mistaking that we are dealing here with the very best kind of poetry, poetry that represents (aspects of) ideal Reality. According to Plato gods and goddesses are without deceit, so we can be positive that the Muse reveals nothing but the Truth. At the same time we have here an artist who does not aspire to any active role in his own creative process: he has taken his seat on the Muse's tripod and is not ἔμφρων, so apparently he is in the state of artis-

¹⁴⁰ II,377E6-8A6.

¹⁴¹ *Laws* IV,719C3-D3.

tic frenzy as described in the *Phaedrus* and other dialogues.¹⁴² As if this were not enough, 'like a fountain he allows to flow out freely whatever comes in', meaning that he does not spoil the divine gift of the Muse with uncalled-for changes or speculative additions of his own. So, the artist in question definitely passes the divine message on to society unadulterated. He may have no idea of what his composition is about, but at least there is no risk that he will change the visionary glimpses of Eternity sent to him by the goddess. His art being μίμησις—and not philosophy, we may infer from the contrast between poet and legislator—he simply represents Truth as it is suggested to him; he does not make selections, modifications or comments of any kind.

Nonetheless, this kind of divine Truth-revealing has to be checked by philosophical censorship. Since the necessity for such supervising cannot be found in a supposed deceitfulness of the Muse, nor in any inconsistency or falsehood originating from this type of composing, it must be found in a lack of proper receptiveness on the part of the public, of you and me, so to speak. In Plato's opinion society cannot be trusted with uncensored Truth. The one thing that Plato fears is that the divine Truth will be profaned by vulgarisation and misunderstanding.

In Plato's eyes artists are not capable of judging what should be made public and what not. Even insofar as they might be willing to check themselves, their lack of knowledge makes them unfit for this responsible task. Their job it is to be inspired by the Muse and to deliver what they are told in as pure a form as possible.¹⁴³ In that manner they are often compelled to contradict themselves when they sketch various answers to one and the same question. This is because, as Plato points out a few lines further down, to depict a particular line of conduct means recommending it.¹⁴⁴ A poet may depict now a prodigal, then a miserly funeral, thus giving us contradictory advice about what we should spend on such occasions.¹⁴⁵ As for the poet, he has no idea which of his contradictory suggestions is the right one. Though at times, when he is under divine inspiration, he receives rays of insight directly from above, these insights are not integrated in any comprehensive vision of Truth. Therefore they remain fragmentary and unreliable, both to the poet himself—who apart from his isolated gift is as ignorant as anyone else¹⁴⁶—and to the masses.

It is important to notice that the contradictions connected with inspired poetry exist only on the concrete level; on the part of the Muse there can be no inconsistency at all. The prodigal and the miserly funeral may both be

¹⁴² *Phdr.* 244-5; *Ion* 533D-7D; *Apol.* 21B-3C; *Meno* 99.

¹⁴³ See above, note 125.

¹⁴⁴ *Laws* IV, 719D7-E3.

¹⁴⁵ *Laws* IV, 719D4-E5.

¹⁴⁶ Cf. *Apol.* 22C.

correct in their respective contexts—in fact they must be, if they are the Muse's work—but it requires knowledge to recognise the higher Truth behind the superficially contradictory details of poetic compositions.¹⁴⁷ Just like 'mimetic' art offers an incoherent picture of the concreta, in the same incoherent manner 'non-mimetic' art offers us insights into ideal Reality. For example, a poet may represent aspects of the divine that, when taken literally, are downright ugly, like what Hesiod tells us about what Cronos or Zeus did in their early days. Nonetheless, Plato leaves room for the possibility that these stories convey Truth, if only one knows how to decode their message. (Then their 'ugliness' will dissipate, we may trust.)¹⁴⁸

The problem is that the poet has no other skill than his μῦησις. He does not, and cannot, give us a clue as to how his work has to be interpreted. That is bad, since he and his work are generally regarded as a major source of practical wisdom. By lack of clear reading instructions, poetry may provide support for all kinds of opinions, whether correct or not.¹⁴⁹ To prevent this from happening, the poet has to be supervised. For example, if he depicts catastrophes, like what happened to Niobe or the Pelopidae, he must either hide the fact that these hardships were a god's doing, or add as a comment that the divine intervention was just and good, and that the sufferers were the better for being punished.¹⁵⁰

In sum, Plato does not deny that (normal, 'non-mimetic') poets, depending on the intensity and the degree of their inspiration, may represent aspects of Truth. Precisely because they do, he calls them 'interpreters of the gods'¹⁵¹ and 'a divine class of people who with the help of Graces and Muses often hit the mark'.¹⁵² But isolated insights may be detrimental to non-philosophical audiences who lack the means to see what is behind the superficial details of artistic representation. 'The many' tend to draw false conclusions from good poetry no less than from bad. That is why even the very best kind of poetry is suspect in Plato's eyes; it has to be supervised, not because there is something wrong with it ontologically, but because it provokes misunderstanding.

¹⁴⁷ Cf. *Plt.* 269B ff. where it is stated that many different poetical stories about our mythological past contain fragments of Truth. However, it takes a philosopher to reconstruct their fundamental unity.

¹⁴⁸ For (Neo-)Platonic interpretation methods with regard to myth, see Graf (1993 [1987]) 184 ff. and 196 f.

¹⁴⁹ Cf. *Prot.* 347E3-7: 'the many' often call upon the poets in their discussions, but since there is no agreement as to what the poets mean, this rarely leads to conclusive arguments.

¹⁵⁰ *Rep.* II,380A7-B2. Cf. the *Index librorum prohibitorum*, according to which Roman Catholics are not allowed to read certain books without special dispensation, or at least not in an uncensored form. Not only 'bad' works, like the complete works of Voltaire, but also the integral text of the Old Testament—God's own word—was put on this list, apparently with the idea that its unsupervised reading might harm the average believer.

¹⁵¹ *Ion* 534E4-5.

¹⁵² *Laws* III,682A3-5.

5. Conclusions

As has often been observed, Aristotle nowhere claims or suggests that he holds a view of art that is radically different from Plato's, nor that he adapted the crucial concept of *μίμησις* to make it fit his own special purposes.¹⁵³ I think that a thorough reassessment of the relation between Aristotelian and Platonic art theory may well lead to the conclusion that Aristotle had little reason for any remarks to that effect. Not only do Aristotle and Plato use the word *μίμησις* linguistically in the same way,¹⁵⁴ but it seems to me that they also to a large extent agree on the question of what art essentially is: both consider art, including literature, a fundamentally mimetic medium—meaning that art represents its objects in a picturelike, immediate, non-discursive way—and moreover they seem to be of one mind in that they both maintain that (good) art represents not what is floating and contingent, but what is necessary.¹⁵⁵

So, on the general question of art's true nature Plato's and Aristotle's art theories do not seem to be at odds, but of course there are some other characteristics of Platonic art theory that are entirely alien to Aristotle, and to most people for that matter. These characteristics have to do not only with Plato's highly hierarchical and asymmetric ontology—in which 'good' is Real, whereas 'bad' is defined as a lack of Reality—, but also with his moral inflexibility.

In the first place we have to realise that Plato develops a classification of art that is closely connected with his ontology. All art that does not attempt at representing reality as Platonism conceives it, is heaped together by him and made into a special subcategory. This subcategory—with drama as its chief representative—is called 'mimetic', not tautologically, but to express that, as compared to 'normal' art, it proceeds in an extra picturelike way: as it focuses on the concreta in their concrete ontic status, it does not copy ideal

¹⁵³ E.g. Gerald Else: "Instead of propounding an entirely new descriptive term for poetry, he has taken over Plato's concept of *μίμησις* ... and then given it a 180-degree turn, so that it ends up meaning almost exactly the opposite of what Plato had meant by it. And Aristotle does not come out and tell us frankly what he is doing. ... Whatever the reasons, Aristotle does not make a frontal attack on Plato's concept of *μίμησις*, but bores at it from within." Else (1986) 74.

¹⁵⁴ See above, section 2.

¹⁵⁵ Cf. *Poet.* 9.1451a36-b11. Sir David Ross explains this well-known passage thus: "Poetry does not aim at reproducing an individual thing, but at giving a new embodiment to a universal truth." Ross (1977¹⁰ [1923]) 278. In these general terms—and of course with due allowance for the fact that Aristotle and Plato think differently of the status of the universal—the same remark holds good for Plato's art conception too. Unfortunately, an adequate comparison between Plato and Aristotle as to their general concept of art is hampered by the fact that Aristotle's work in this field has been badly damaged by the ages: part of it is lost, and the other part, the *Poetics*, is not only incomplete but moreover was never meant as a general introduction to the philosophy of art. For Aristotle's answers to general questions such as what art is, we have to read very much between the lines (and of course to compare the *Poetics* with e.g. the last part of the *Politics*).

Reality, but contents itself with copying copies of Reality, and thus it is at two removes from Truth and possesses a low ontological status. Apart from being ontologically bad, 'mimetic' art is dangerous, since it nourishes the irrational element of the soul.

With regard to the concept of 'mimetic' art it is important to notice 1) that this concept makes sense only within the hierarchical tripartite structure of Plato's ontology, and 2) that—once given this ontology—the development of such a concept is an entirely logical and comprehensible move.

In addition to 'mimetic' art, Plato distinguishes another art category that fails to represent Reality in a proper way, namely art that is based on a 'wrong' kind of mythology.¹⁵⁶ This type of art does not convey Truth any more than does 'mimetic' art; it is not doubly picturelike, but that does not prevent it from providing us with a false picture of Reality. Ontologically speaking, Plato recognises only one type of art that possesses quality, namely art that adequately represents (aspects of) the eternal Forms, or in Plato's own words 'art that gets its likeness [*sc.* to Reality] from being a *μίμημα* of Beauty'.¹⁵⁷ Both art that is based on the 'wrong' mythological concepts and 'correct' art are at one remove from Reality—they share this position with the concreta—, but the difference is that the former is a bad (untrue) copy, whereas the latter is a successful copy of Reality.

Now, we would certainly expect Plato to expel from his city all artistic genres and individual artistic products that do not meet his highest ontological standards,—and indeed this is what he does, since not only 'mimetic' and 'wrong mythological' art are banished, but as a genre—in spite of its occasional 'good' lines—epic is not welcome either, on the mere ground that it is 'mimetic' in part. However, the surprise is that Plato's purging rage does not stop at this point: ontologically 'good' art—art that by divine inspiration is a flawless representation of Reality—is not, or not straightaway, released for publication either, not before it is checked for any ambiguities or distressing insights that it may contain to a general public. No responsible behaviour in this respect can be expected from the artist: as he has no knowledge himself, he is unable to judge what should be heard or seen by others. The only one to decide what is safe enough in this respect is the philosopher (or one of his appointed magistrates).

To conclude, Plato's philosophical conception of art is by no means incomprehensible or inconsistent. He gives a clear answer to the two questions that are relevant in this connection, viz. the question what art is, and the question what should be the social function of art. These answers are in line with the basic tenets of Platonic philosophy as a whole. As to Plato's admittedly rigid policy of art, it is due not to his supposedly low esteem of all

¹⁵⁶ Of course, 'mimetic' art and 'bad mythological' art may overlap: literature that is formally 'mimetic' may choose a 'bad' mythological story as its subject-matter into the bargain.

¹⁵⁷ *Laws* II,668B1-2.

artistic products, but to his lack of trust in the mental capacities of the average inhabitant of the ideal city, including the artist. It is this lack of trust that makes Plato want to censor even the—in his own eyes—very best kind of artistic composition.¹⁵⁸

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¹⁵⁸ I am grateful to Dr J.W. McAllister for his advice about the English.

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CHAPTER SIX
RECOLLECTION AND POTENTIALITY IN PHILOPONUS

FRANS A.J. DE HAAS

Dicendum quia et si a nobis ipsis inveniamus tamen
principia et habitum a doctore accipimus
(Philoponus *De intellectu* 56.33-34)

The 75th birthday of one's teacher and doctorate supervisor is a special occasion.* In this paper I intend to consider three aspects of this occasion in some Neoplatonic detail. First we shall ponder the relationship between a teacher and a pupil: does the teacher really convey his knowledge to the pupil or does he only bring to light what already lay hidden in the pupil's mind? Secondly, we shall discover that if we are to account for teaching and learning in the proper Neoplatonic way we need to extend Aristotle's scheme of actuality and potentiality in the *De anima* by a third kind of potentiality. Some Neoplatonists believed that one may find ample support for this potentiality in Aristotle as well. Finally, since a birthday calls for a party we shall also consider briefly why and how Neoplatonists in Late Antiquity considered drunkenness an illuminating parallel to describe the state of the pupil's mind.

1. The writing tablet

For any Platonist the starting point of a discussion of teaching and learning are the *Meno* and the *Phaedo*.¹ Learning is in fact recollecting what our soul once knew but forgot when she descended into a body. Teaching is helping the pupil recover this hidden knowledge e.g. by asking relevant questions in the proper order, or confronting him with carefully chosen examples to

* This paper has much profited from discussions with audiences at the Universities of Amsterdam and Groningen, as well as from the insightful comments of Richard Sorabji, Sylvia Berryman, and my colleagues at the Utrecht University Department of Philosophy: Jaap Mansfeld, Keimpe Algra, Cees Leijenhorst and Irma Croese. The research for this paper was supported in turn by the Foundation for Research in the Fields of Philosophy and Theology (SFT), subsidised by the Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research (NWO); The Niels Stensen Foundation; and at the time of writing the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences.

¹ See Plato *Meno* 80D-6C, 96D-100B; *Phaedo* 72E-8B. Useful analyses of these texts can be found in Moravcsik (1970), Ackrill (1973), de Rijk (1986) 339-341, and Scott (1995). On the important issue of the mental status of Forms in Plato see de Rijk *o.c.* 63-65.

induce him or her to infer the truth thus exemplified. For a Neoplatonist this simple picture requires extensive elaboration in the face of the psychology developed by Aristotle and the Peripatetic tradition. As is well known Aristotle opposed the existence of Forms and therefore rejected recollection.² He adhered to a traditional empirical account of knowledge acquisition as famously and obscurely summarised in *Posterior Analytics* II.19.³ Two texts in particular illuminate his position.

In *De anima* II.5.417a21-b28⁴ Aristotle distinguishes between two different kinds of potentiality and actuality. A new-born child has knowledge in potentiality because as a human being it has the capacity for acquiring knowledge: this is *first potentiality*. Later, when the child has grown up, it may actually acquire knowledge of, say, geometry: this is *first actuality*. This first actuality constitutes a disposition (ἕξις) of the soul. The actual knower can contemplate his knowledge at will, external circumstances permitting. Hence the state of first actuality implies at the same time the further potentiality of actually contemplating, i.e. applying, the knowledge gained: this is *second potentiality*. When the geometer is actually using his knowledge to solve a geometrical problem or to teach he has reached the corresponding state of *second actuality*.

In *De anima* III.4.429b31-30a2 Aristotle provides an analogy to elucidate the potentiality of the intellectual faculty of the soul for acquiring knowledge. The potentiality of intellect to receive intelligible forms resembles the potentiality of a writing tablet without any writing on it.⁵ The image of a blank writing tablet serves as a vivid rejection of innate knowledge. We shall see that the Platonic tradition applied considerable ingenuity in dealing with this passage, especially since the distinctions of *De anima* II.5 were fully integrated in the Neoplatonic system.⁶

Some Platonists simply denied that Aristotle's analogy should be reconciled with recollection and accepted that Plato and Aristotle had different views. Proclus often opposes empiricism by emphasising that the blank writing tablet is not a proper analogy for the state of our soul, which already

² Aristotle argues against the Forms in e.g. *Metaph.* I.6-9, and against innate knowledge in *APo* I.1 and II.19.

³ For a more technical account of the same process see e.g. Alex. *DA* 85.10-86.6 with Accattino-Donini (1996) 277-280.

⁴ Part of this passage is translated below p. 177.

⁵ Aristotle did not say that the soul resembles a writing tablet, as Hamlyn (1993) 138-139 rightly notes. Cf. Alex. *DA* 84.24-85.5 who differentiates between on the one hand the material intellect as the lack of writing (τὸ ἄγραφον) and the suitability (ἐπιτηδεύσις) for being written upon, and on the other hand the entire soul or its bearer as the writing tablet. In this way he can explain how sensation and thought require an ordinary affection, i.e. of the writing tablet, which is not at the same time an affection of the material intellect. The latter is perfected while its nature remains intact, cf. *DA* III.4.429b5-9 with *DA* II.5.417b3-7.

⁶ Major discussions of the writing tablet can be found in e.g. Philop. *De intell.* 36.70-40.43, Ps.-Philop. in *DA* 517.33-520.20, Ps.-Simpl. in *DA* 236.18-31, Sophon. in *DA* 134.38-135.33.

possesses all *logoi* in itself.⁷ Ammonius son of Hermias explicitly criticised Plutarch of Athens for ascribing to Aristotle what he considers to be Plato's view, viz. that a child's intellect is already in a state of dispositional knowledge.⁸ Ps.-Philoponus, who has recorded Ammonius' judgement for us, himself endorsed this position.⁹

In a similar way Damascius dealt with a passage in *Philebus* 38E9-9C6 which may have inspired Aristotle to employ the image of the writing tablet in the first place. In the *Philebus*, Damascius paraphrases, 'Socrates compares sense-perception to a scribe who writes down the forms in memory,¹⁰ imagination to a painter because of its reproductive power, and opinion (δόξα) to a book because of its faculties of reflection, combination and definition' (Dam. in *Phil.* §174 tr. Westerink). Damascius raises the question (quite unexpected to modern readers)¹¹ why Plato would compare opinion with a book 'taking the same view as Aristotle, who defines it as a blank tablet'? His answer is that opinion is a book only with respect to the general notions derived from sensible things. 'Or what has more truth in it, in one way forms are produced from within, in another way they are inscribed from without: in so far as the soul has recourse to the general notions that belong to its own essence, they evidently arise from within' (§175, 5-8; tr. after Westerink). We may surmise that for Damascius the image of writing may be appropriate for notions derived from sense perception, but it fails as an image of remembering innate knowledge. Evidently, he sees little agreement between Plato and Aristotle.

In such contexts the image of the blank writing tablet is regarded as proof that in Aristotle's opinion a child's intellect is merely suited for receiving the *logoi* of reality and has not yet received them at all. By way of contrast, the Platonic position may be phrased in Aristotelian terms by identifying the state of the child as first actuality (disposition), not as the first potentiality that Aristotle's image was meant to convey. I believe that most modern

⁷ Procl. in *Crat.* 61.5-9; in *Alc.* 277.10-18, 280.19-281.9; in *Eucl.* 16.8-16. The souls always have writing upon them and the scribe (i.e. the active intellect) is in them, even though not all souls can read all the writing because their eye was hurt by the forgetfulness caused by their incarnation (in *Alc.* 281.5-6: λημῶντος αὐταῖς τοῦ ὁμματος ὑπὸ τῆς γενεσιουργοῦ λήθης). For Proclus on the innate knowledge of the soul see further Steel (1997).

⁸ Ammon. ap. Ps.-Philop. in *DA* 519.37-520.7. Compare Ps.-Philoponus' criticism of Iamblichus at 533.34-35, see n. 16. Plutarch of Athens distinguished (a) the dispositional intellect in children; (b) dispositional intellect in actuality, i.e. recollected knowledge, in adults; (c) intellect in mere actuality, coming from the outside.

⁹ Ps.-Philop. in *DA* 564.38-565.6. Ps.-Philoponus tries to find a middle way by distinguishing (a) intellect in children which is actual *qua* form, but potential *qua* potentially knowing things; (b) dispositional intellect in adults with resident knowledge in a state of rest; (c) dispositional intellect in act which uses knowledge and is actual with respect to it.

¹⁰ Procl. in *Remp.* 233.8-16 specifies that this 'scribe' is the common sense.

¹¹ Ps.-Philop. in *DA* 538.6-10 seems to refer to the same passage, but with respect to the potential intellect, not opinion, which is written upon by the active intellect. This is of course more in line with Aristotle's text. For the difficulties in keeping apart the potential intellect from the faculties of imagination and opinion see Blumenthal (1996) 107-108.

students of Plato and Aristotle would agree. In this account of the image, then, Aristotle's first potentiality for knowledge remains unused in the Platonic framework.

In dealing with Aristotle's analogy the Platonic tradition provided at least three different ways to put this potentiality to good use. Of course Plato's theory of recollection is characterised by the fact that we are not conscious of our innate knowledge initially. So even if our innate knowledge is present and in perfect shape, we have to learn, i.e. to remember it. So the first option is to interpret the potentiality of the writing tablet as our lack of awareness of innate knowledge.

A fragment of Plutarch of Chaeronea states that knowledge is present in our soul but concealed beneath other things which come in from outside 'like the case of the tablet sent by Demaratus'.¹² The reference is to a story told by Herodotus (VII 239) in which the spy Demaratus concealed a message for the Spartans from the Persian enemy by inscribing it on the wood of a wax tablet. He then covered the message under wax which he left blank so as not to arouse suspicion. Plutarch's fragment succinctly suggests that a clear message is preserved underneath the accretions. If we clear away the wax, the message, our innate knowledge, will appear without mutilation.

Plotinus seems to have adumbrated a similar position.¹³ He believed that our souls never descend from the intelligible realm entirely. Therefore, when we are liberated from the distractions of the sensible world and direct our gaze inwards, our souls can become aware of the intelligible world. Since their highest part did not really leave this world at all, a proper focus of the soul renders it capable of the insight that is characteristic of Intellect. At that stage it has become aware that it knows and has always known everything precisely as it is in the intelligible realm. Generally Plotinus regards the image of inscribing letters as misleading for the study of soul because of its material connotations (*Enn.* IV.6 [41] 3.71-78). Only once does he use the dynamic image of our possessing the letters of Intellect written as laws within us, with Intellect both writing and having written them (*Enn.* V.3 [49] 4, esp. 1-3, 20-22).

However, Plotinus' doctrine of the undescended intellect was severely criticised by later Platonists. Iamblichus argued forcefully that our soul is no longer part of Intellect in any way.¹⁴ If introspection yields knowledge of the

¹² Plut. fr. 215d Sandbach. For the reference see Scott (1995) 18 with n. 7 who adapts this story to propose a challenging interpretation of Platonic recollection which must remain outside the discussion here.

¹³ See e.g. *Enn.* II.5 [25] 2.18-24, 3.25-31; IV.6 [41] 3.10-16; V.3 [49] 4. A useful summary of Plotinus' position with regard to anamnesis is to be found in McCumber (1978).

¹⁴ Steel 38-51, 116-119. Note that in publications by Steel all references to 'Priscianus in DA' regard our Ps.-Simplicius in DA III. There is considerable debate about the identity of the author of the commentary on DA III traditionally attributed to Simplicius. Bossier and Steel have made a strong case that Priscianus Lydus is the author, others prefer to keep other possi-

intelligible realm it is only knowledge of the images of the Forms that reside in our intellect. This deplorable state of affairs is the result of a substantial change of the soul caused by her descent. But if the descent of the soul really constitutes a substantial change it becomes impossible to maintain the personal identity of the soul through that change. Iamblichus designed a splendid theory to remedy this problem, which we find expressly related to Aristotle's noetic in the work of Priscianus and Simplicius.

For Iamblichus (as well as for Priscianus, Simplicius, and Damascius) the descended soul is an entity that oscillates between the intelligible and sensible realms. It exists in an ongoing process of substantial variation, showing forth various activities at the same time. From one point of view our intellect always contemplates the reason-principles it contains in a unified way (Aristotle's 'active intellect'). However, the descent caused it to display a kind of potentiality (Aristotle's 'potential intellect') as well, in so far as the descent has alienated it from its former self which was characterised by unified intelligising. The actualisation by the active intellect that is needed to restore the intellect to its former perfection appears to come from outside (Aristotle's 'intellect-from-without'¹⁵) as a result of the soul's alienation from itself. In fact it is able to become aware of its innate knowledge precisely because of the intellectual activity that belonged to its own substance all along: the soul reverts upon itself. The human intellect that has thus re-discovered its own reason-principles is equated with Aristotle's dispositional intellect (first actuality) and is said to know the universal forms in a non-unified way. Finally, this discursive reasoning may be abandoned when by a further movement of reversion the human intellect restores itself to a unified act of intellection that is identical with being as the proper immanent perfection of the intellectual essence (Aristotle's second actuality). In this way Iamblichus aimed at achieving the preservation of the identity of soul through the substantial changes caused by the incarnation.

This theory stresses the affection of the entire human soul which hampers access to the images of the Forms in the human intellect. This opens two further options for the interpretation of the potentiality of the writing tablet. It may designate our soul's imperfection, expressed either as the imperfect perception of her innate knowledge, or as the soul's imperfect state itself—the latter being the cause of the former.

The first of these options is reflected in Iamblichus' startling interpretation of Aristotle's image of the writing tablet. Iamblichus argued that a writing tablet without letters (γράμματα) on it is not called a 'writing tablet' (γράμματαῖον) in the first place. So if Aristotle chose this term instead of

bilities open. See Bossier/Steel (1972), Steel (1997), and esp. Blumenthal (1996) 65-71 for a brief discussion of the issue.

¹⁵ See Arist. *GA* II.3.736b13-29 and II.6.744b21. For an interpretation of the 'intellect from without' in its biological context see Moraux (1955).

e.g. 'papyrus sheet' (χαρτίον) he meant us to understand that the intellect already possessed the *logoi*. But why, then, did he use the term 'without writing' (ἄγραφος)? Iamblichus boldly suggested that 'without writing' should be understood as 'badly written' (κακόγραφος) and therefore difficult to read.¹⁶

A similar 'correction' is proposed by Priscianus Lydus¹⁷ who draws on the authority of Theophrastus. For already Theophrastus raised doubts about a matter-like potentiality of intellect and recommended a search for a more satisfactory notion of potentiality.¹⁸ Priscianus gladly obliges: in stressing the potentiality of intellect Aristotle did not mean that the intellect does not possess the forms but only that it is open to further actualisation and completion by the active intellect. It possesses the forms perfectly in that they are constantly being perfected and actually being 'written' by the first intellect. These are not different moments in time but coincidental expressions of the descended status of the soul.¹⁹ The 'illumination' of the potential intellect renders the intelligible forms contained in the essence of intellect *purely* objects of thought (*Metaphr.* 27.1 ἀκραιβνῶς νοητά). They lost their purity as the result of the soul's self-alienation.

We have already seen that Ammonius son of Hermias rejected the Platonisation of Aristotle's image. Yet, he used a different image to make the same point as Iamblichus and Priscianus. He claimed that the potential intellect in us possesses knowledge of everything in the way that a shadow-painting possesses the vague outlines (τύπους μὴ φανερούς) of everything it is going to receive 'as an image' (ἐν εἰκόνι). In this obscure mode the human intellect possesses the objects of thought, which become a clear image (εἰκὼν) of the transcendent Forms only when the intellect actually contemplates them.²⁰

In these three authors the limited knowledge of the descended intellect is expressed by means of describing the imperfect perception of its content. However, it is a characteristic of any intellect to be identical with its objects. Therefore the image of writing was also used to focus on the other aspect of

¹⁶ Iambl. ap. Ps.-Philop. in *DA* 533.25-35. I see no reason to follow Steel (1997) 299 in suggesting that Proclus would have agreed with Iamblichus on this point. Ps.-Philop. in *DA* 533.34-35 dryly comments that Iamblichus said this so as to show that Aristotle was in agreement with him.

¹⁷ See Prisc. *Metaphr.* 26.29-27.6, 35.24-36.5. For his Iamblican view of the soul see also *Metaphr.* 29.18-32.19 with Steel (1978) 145-149. The similar view of Ps.-Simplicius is discussed by Steel *o.c.* 132-141 under the name of Priscianus Lydus (see note 14).

¹⁸ Theophr. ap. Prisc. *Metaphr.* 27.3-6 = part of Theophr. fr. 307C FHSG; compare all of fr. 307A-D FHSG. For Theophrastus' view of the intellect see Devereux (1992).

¹⁹ See e.g. Prisc. *Metaphr.* 36.2-5, esp. 2-3 κατὰ τὴν ὕφεσιν καὶ τὸν ἐπινοούμενον χωρισμὸν καὶ κατὰ τὴν αὐτοῦ ιδιότητα.

²⁰ Ammon. ap. Ps.-Philop. in *DA* 519.8-12. For Ammonius' view of *logoi* in the human intellect see Tempelis (1997) and (1998).

this identity, the imperfect state of the intellect itself. The following text of Pseudo-Simplicius is the prime example:

1. And this [intellect, i.e. the potential intellect] is in potentiality in a sense though not *simpliciter* like matter, because of the self-actualised perfection of the intellect by the objects of intellection and because the remaining and proceeding intellect are not just two, but also in a way one, and in that respect the intellect is also in a way in actuality. In so far as it is proceeding and leaving itself and still imperfect it is in potentiality and 'nothing in actuality before it thinks' (DA 429a24), i.e. before it also becomes sufficient to think through itself.
2. This, too, is the intellect that is likened to a blank writing tablet: for the latter has no writing on it even though it is suitable for being written upon. For our soul, which is flowing outward away from its own essence to such an extent that it is brought to ignorance and lack of knowledge both of itself and of the entire formal substance, stands in need of perfection through something else, so to speak. It is [perfection] through itself but as if by something else because it has left itself and its own essence.
3. Consequently, it is perfected by reverting to the substantial reason-principles in itself while searching and finding in virtue of them the truth of the things that are, when they are awakened to contemplation and perfect its outwardly proceeding 'part' (τὸ ἔξω προῖόν ἐαυτῆς). Therefore, too, the proceeded intellect is perfected in terms of having writing upon it and as it were by way of addition and from something else: for it has been made perfect by its essential activity. 'This applies to the soul' (DA 430a2), i.e. the soul under discussion, which is clearly flowing and either still (a) imperfect or (b) perfected in terms of disposition and projection.²¹ For only (c) the substantial [intellect] which is in pure actuality (κατ' ἐνέργειαν καθαρὰν) and remains in itself is also perfect of its own accord (ἄφ' ἑαυτοῦ). (Ps.-Simplicius in DA III.4.429b29, 236.13-31)

In §§2-3 Ps.-Simplicius stresses the intellect's self-alienation and loss of knowledge to such an extent that Aristotle's image of the blank writing tablet becomes as acceptable as can be under the prevailing Neoplatonist theory. Note that here the *tertium comparationis* of the image has become both the writing tablet and its potentiality, whereas Aristotle only compared the potentialities of the soul and the writing tablet. It may seem that the sequence (a)-(b)-(c) in §3 lists first potentiality (imperfection), first actuality (disposition) and second actuality (perfection). However, in §1 Pseudo-Simplicius started out by carefully noting that the potentiality under discussion is *not* the straightforward potentiality of matter, i.e. first potentiality. It cannot be second potentiality either, since this depends on dispositional knowledge (b) and the required type of potentiality is applied to *both* the stages of imperfection (a) *and* the intermediate state of disposition (b). We may surmise that the new focus on different degrees of imperfection of the descended soul provides the notion of potentiality with a certain latitude.

²¹ I.e. on the imagination. For the varieties of this projection theory see e.g. Mueller (1990).

In sum: Platonists interpret the potentiality of the writing tablet as (1) the sheer lack of awareness of innate knowledge; (2) the imperfect perception of our innate knowledge; (3) the imperfect state(s) of the descended soul or intellect itself. But how are we to conceive of a potentiality that may serve such functions? Does it not differ widely from the Aristotelian notion of potentiality? And if so, how can these interpretations of the potentiality of the writing tablet pass as feasible interpretations of Aristotle in a commentary on his text? For the most elaborate answers to these questions we may turn to John Philoponus.

2. A third kind of potentiality

Ammonius' pupil John Philoponus pays considerable attention to the image of the writing tablet in his commentary on the third book of Aristotle's *De anima* (*De intell.* 36.70-40.43). The text does not survive in Greek, but only in a medieval Latin translation by William of Moerbeke which is known as the *De intellectu*.²² His commentary nicely captures the perplexity the image arouses in a Neoplatonist. First Philoponus describes the obvious way out: the image shows that according to Aristotle the forms of intelligibles are in the soul according to *first* potentiality, unlike Plato who said they were present by way of disposition, i.e. *second* potentiality.

However, according to Philoponus this interpretation cannot be right. It would follow that Aristotle also denied the soul pre-existence²³ and immortality, and hence granted it a beginning in time. The latter is at variance with Aristotle's statement that the universe is eternal. For either rational souls are immortal and exist, infinite in number, in an infinite past and an infinite future; or else, if such infinities are impossible, rational souls are mortal. If so, they are either incorporeal so that they will pass away into nothing; or corporeal so that they are resolved into matter (37.81-38.98). The latter options, so Philoponus believes, are in contradiction with Aristotle's philosophy as a whole. As a proper commentator²⁴ one should interpret the passage of the writing tablet in the light of the whole body of Aristotelian doctrine, such as Aristotle's statements on the active intellect (38.99-39.1).

²² Ed. Verbeke (1966), with important emendations by Bossier in Charlton (1991) who provides an English translation. The Greek commentary on *DA* III printed in M. Hayduck, *Ioannis Philoponi in Aristotelis de anima libros commentaria* [CAG 15], Berlin 1897, is not to be attributed to Philoponus. For this issue see Charlton (1991) 6-12, Lautner (1992), Blumenthal (1996) 61-65. Against Lautner Charlton opts for Stephanus in his forthcoming translation of the book (as Richard Sorabji informs me). Sophonias *In DA* III preserves close parallels to our Latin text which probably depend on the Greek version of Philoponus *In DA* III; cf. Van Riet (1965). The parallels in Sophonias are conveniently printed in a separate apparatus in Verbeke's edition.

²³ In *Phaedo* 72E-8B Plato used recollection of innate knowledge to argue for the pre-existence of the soul.

²⁴ See e.g. Philop. in *Cat.* 6.30-35 with Hadot (1990) vol. I, 123-130.

Philoponus quotes *DA* II.2.413b24-27 as sufficient proof: the rational soul is the only faculty of the soul that 'can be separated as the eternal is separated from the corruptible' (39.21-27). In Philoponus' opinion this text among others in the *De anima* shows that for Aristotle, too, the rational soul is separate and immortal.²⁵ Particularly revealing are his comments on *DA* III.5.430a15-17 concerning the active intellect cast in the role of light:

1. And later he says that just as the sun makes colours which are in potentiality, i.e. colours at night, to be colours in actuality, so intellect which is in actuality, i.e. the teacher's intellect and the Divine Intellect, makes intellect in potentiality intellect in actuality.
2. The Philosopher's meaning is plain from the model itself. Just as the rising sun does not provide existence for the colours, but makes manifest colours which exist there but are not evident, and does not make them to be colours (for they were just as much colours during the night) but makes them visible, so intellect which is in actuality perfects intellect which is in potentiality and brings it to actuality not by putting into it forms which are not there, but by bringing to light forms which are non-evident and hidden because of the state of swoon which is the effect of birth.²⁶
3. And it is this that he calls 'potentiality' in the first sense. For there is a difference between the geometer who is in a cataleptic swoon though he still possesses [knowledge] dispositionally, or who is asleep, and one who is in none of these conditions but is not exercising the disposition; the one has both the disposition and the actuality hidden and is not capable of functioning; the other functions when he wants without being impeded by anything. The intellect which enters the world of becoming is like a person asleep or delirious. (Philop. *De intell.* 39.27-40.43; tr. Charlton)

It is striking (and perhaps flattering for a teacher) that in the first paragraph the active intellect is identified as 'the teacher's intellect or the Divine Intellect'. From other passages²⁷ it is clear that normally the teacher is the cause of the first actualisation in the development of the descended intellect. In these cases the active intellect is a human intellect (*pace* Alexander)²⁸ though in a different human being: the teacher. Even when we discover things ourselves we derive the principles and the dispositional state from the

²⁵ Compare Philoponus' discussion of the commentary tradition on the active intellect in *De intell.* 43.18-54.84.

²⁶ Compare Sophon. *DA* 135.20-24: ὥς οὖν ὁ ἥλιος τα χρώματα, δυνάμει ὄντα ἐν τῇ νυκτί, ἀνατείλας ποιεῖ ἐνεργά, οὐ τὴν ὑπόστασιν παρέχων αὐτοῖς, ἀλλ' ὕφεισθηκότα καὶ ἄδηλα ἐμφανῆ ποιῶν, οὕτω καὶ ὁ ἐνεργεῖα νοῦς τελειοῖ τὸν δυνάμει, οὐκ ἐντιθεὶς ἐν αὐτῷ μὴ ὄντα εἶδη, ἀλλὰ κρυπτόμενα διὰ τὸν ἀπὸ γενέσεως κάρον ἐκφαίνων.

²⁷ Cf. *De intell.* 10.34-37, 18.43-19.56, 33.88-89 (translated below p. 174), 48.28-32, 56.31-40, 58.99-101, 91.46-49. The role of the teacher is conspicuously absent from Ps.-Philop. in *DA* III; cf. Charlton (1991) 9. For general remarks on the teacher-pupil relationship in sixth-century philosophy see Jackson (1998) 15-17, 42, on Olympiodorus' *Gorgias*-commentary.

²⁸ As is well known Alex. *Mantissa* 107.29-110.3 described the active intellect *DA* III.5 in terms of the Divine Intellect of *Metaph.* XII. See Schroeder (1990) 48-51, 61-69 for translation and commentary, and Sharples (1987) 1204-1214 for a general assessment. Explicit opposition to Alexander's interpretation may be found at e.g. Philop. *De intell.* 10.29-37.

teacher. In some unspecified cases²⁹ the Divine i.e. Demiurgic Intellect may take on that role itself. As soon as the pupil's intellect can think discursively on its own account the teacher is no longer needed.

The second paragraph shows how the comparison between active intellect and light may easily be taken to support the innateness of knowledge. At *De intell.* 57.62-69 Philoponus explicitly highlights 'the image of the sun'³⁰ as an important passage for people who would like to harmonise Plato and Aristotle on this point.³¹ It is clear that at this stage of his philosophical development³² Philoponus is in sympathy with such harmonisation.

The third paragraph provides us with a first glimpse of how Philoponus intends to deal with the potentiality of the writing tablet. Like Ps.-Simplicius he denies that it is first potentiality.³³ Instead he refers to swoon, sleep, or delirium as examples of states in which the deployment of dispositional knowledge is impeded. These states illustrate a variety of degrees in which our understanding may be impeded, just as Ps.-Simplicius made the potentiality of the writing tablet cover both ignorance and dispositional knowledge. The intellect that enters the world of becoming is in such a state. More detail is provided in two further passages from the *De intellectu*:

Also intellect is changed from intellect in potentiality to intellect in actuality not through taking in forms it did not already possess, nor by changing from potentiality in the first sense, but like the sleeping geometer who at that time does not know the things he knows. He possesses the accounts (*rationes*), but is hindered from the cognition of what he possesses by sleep, and needs something to remove the impediment (I mean sleep); in the same way intellect needs something to remove the impediment. That will be intellect in actuality, either a teaching intellect or the universal intellect. And the impediment is the absurd opinions which come from the connection with imagination and which it purges away by refutations to bring to light the treasure which has existed in it all along. (Philop. *De intell.* 33.82-91, tr. Charlton)

The impediment to a full awareness of one's innate knowledge consists in the absurd opinions that result from intellect's connection to the non-rational faculties of soul. The potentiality of the writing tablet stands for intellect's state of being impeded. The intellect can be fully aware of its innate knowledge only when this impediment has been removed. This is the task performed by the teacher's intellect or the universal intellect. In other words, because the state of being impeded is regarded as a state of *potentiality*, the

²⁹ Cf. *De intell.* 33.89, 91.48-49. Perhaps the Divine Intellect deserves the credit when we discover things spontaneously (56.31-40), esp. in those cases when we do not use our imagination but rely on innate knowledge (62.6-63.18, translated below p. 175).

³⁰ This is a Neoplatonic rendering of Aristotle's mention of 'light' at *DA* 430a14-17. Compare Philop. *De intell.* 57.62-69.

³¹ I follow Charlton (1991) 74 n. 61 in translating *sibi* (viz. αὐτῷ) as 'him' sc. Plato.

³² For a bold hypothesis concerning the chronology of Philoponus' thought and work see Verrycken (1990); for criticism of this hypothesis see De Haas (1997) xii-xiv, 31-36, 291-293.

³³ Cf. *De intell.* 33.82-93, 57.62-69.

removal of the impediment is the corresponding *actualisation* provided by the active intellect.

However, the state of the descended intellect is not sufficiently expressed by pointing to the impediment of absurd opinions. After all, since Iamblichus it is common doctrine that the soul itself should be changed substantially in the descent. This aspect of the theory comes to the fore in the following text which aims at explaining how the human intellect may forget forms it has come to know without the use of the imagination:

But when [the intellect] receives separate forms, taking in the cognition of them by its own power and being unaffected, how can it forget?³⁴

Perhaps imagination is the cause of this too, but in another way. Just as when [the intellect] descended, the composition with non-rational life, as though imposing a sleep or a swoon (*alienatio*) on it, became the cause of a general forgetting, so it would not be surprising if here too imagination, diverting [the intellect] into itself and generally to life in the body, should cause it partial forgetting, darkening its purity and the clarity of its substance, as happens also in drunkenness and similar circumstances.

So here too imagination is the cause of this: taking on alien shapes from sensible things and thereby stupefying the intellect it makes it depart from its proper station and cognition. (Philop. *De intell.* 62.6-63.18, tr. after Bossier and Charlton (1991) 79 with note 90)

Here we learn that the purity and clarity of the substance of intellect itself is 'darkened'.³⁵ We may surmise that in illuminating this darkness the external active intellect restores our intellect to its former purity and clarity. In sum, the removal of the impediment of absurd opinions amounts to a substantial change of the human intellect.

Philoponus is well aware that in showing Aristotle's noetic to be an expression of Platonic recollection theory he is establishing a different kind of potentiality alongside the first and second potentiality Aristotle distinguished in *De anima* II.5. Let us see where he locates this potentiality within Aristotle's framework:

1. If we have shown a thousand times over, quoting Aristotelian texts, that he wants the rational soul to be separate and immortal, it is plain that even if he here likens it to an uninscribed thing we write on he does not mean that it has forms in potentiality in the first sense (the sense in which semen is a man in potentiality).
2. But a certain latitude must be recognised in both meanings of 'potentiality'. For we say that prime matter is in potentiality a man, and also the elements and semen and all the things which are in potentiality in the first sense,

³⁴ In the preceding paragraphs Philoponus set out Aristotle's answer to the question 'why do we not understand always?' (*DA* 430a5-6). He showed that (the use of) the faculty of imagination in acquiring knowledge of sensible and mathematical forms explains the possibility of our forgetting this knowledge: the imagination is easily affected. Now he broaches the question why we forget the knowledge of forms that the intellect acquired without intervention of the imagination.

³⁵ Cf. the language of purity employed by Priscianus, above p. 170.

that is, by virtue of suitability; but they are not in potentiality in the same way but some are closer to the thing and some more remote.

3. A similar latitude, then, must be recognised in connection with potentiality in the second sense, i.e. by way of disposition. Both the sleeping geometer and the one who is awake are said to be [one who knows] in potentiality, but the waking geometer is closer to the actuality; and the geometer who is asleep or drunk because he is held down by sleep or intoxication, resembles the man who does not have the disposition at all.

4. So in the same way even if he says the soul resembles an uninscribed thing you write on, he calls it this because of the holding down of cognition by the passions which makes it seem as if it did not have forms at all. (Philop. *De intell.* 39.1-18, following Charlton in both text and translation)

Philoponus' solution consists in arguing for a considerable latitude (*latitudo aliqua*, πλάτος πολύ) in the meaning of both first and second potentiality. Prime matter, the elements, and semen are all a human being in potentiality in the first sense, but each in a different degree because they are increasingly closer to the actuality, a human being (§2). In the same way a geometer who is asleep, drunk, or awake has knowledge in potentiality in the second sense in virtue of his dispositional knowledge, but each time in a different degree because of the distance from fully-fledged second actuality, i.e. the autonomous use of his knowledge (§3). Only when awake is he able to use his knowledge at will, which is, so to speak, the maximum degree of second potentiality. When asleep or drunk it is as if the geometer does not have at all. In this respect he resembles the soul, which *appears* not to possess the forms at all, and therefore *appears* to resemble an uninscribed writing tablet (§4). In this perspective Aristotle's comparison of the soul with an uninscribed writing tablet is correct and need not be discarded.

It hardly needs pointing out that the addition of drunkenness to the varieties of impediment has a solid precedent in Plato as a description of the disconcerting experience of the descended soul:

Now were we not saying some time ago that when the soul makes use of the body to investigate something through vision or hearing or some other sense—of course investigating by means of the body is the same as investigating by sense—it is dragged by the body towards objects that are never constant, and itself wanders in a sort of dizzy drunken confusion, inasmuch as it is apprehending confused objects?³⁶ (Plato *Phaedo* 79C1-8, tr. Hackforth)

Moreover, together with sleep drunkenness figures prominently in Aristotle as an impediment to a proper actualisation of the second potentiality of knowledge.³⁷ If one's aim is to establish Platonic recollection within the framework of Aristotle's *De anima* it is surely a helpful manoeuvre to explain the state of knowledge of the descended soul in terms of Aristotle's

³⁶ Here the objects concerned are, of course, sensible objects, not the dim reflections of the Forms in our intellect.

³⁷ See p. 180 with n. 48.

impediments. But is it equally Aristotelian to regard these states as states of *potentiality* that all belong to a single *latitude* of potentiality? To these aspects of Philoponus' doctrine we should now turn.

3. Aristotelian precedents?

At first sight Aristotle does not seem to favour a connection between impediments such as drunkenness, sleep, or madness, and potentiality. On the contrary, Aristotle stresses that one should only speak of a potentiality if a number of conditions have been met such as time, disposition, location of agent and patient etc. Only when all external hindrances have been removed a potentiality exists. His position is most succinctly put in the discussion of actuality and potentiality in *Metaphysics* IX.5:

Therefore, everything which has a rational potentiality, when it desires that for which it has a potentiality and in the circumstances in which it has it, must do this. And it has the potentiality in question when the passive object is present and is in a certain state; if not it will not be able to act. To add the qualification 'if nothing external prevents it' is not further necessary; for it has the potentiality in so far as this is a potentiality of acting, and it is this not in all circumstances but on certain conditions, among which will be *the exclusion of external hindrances*; for these are barred by some of the additional specifications. (Arist. *Metaphysica* IX.5.1048a13-21, tr. after Ross, my emphasis)

Given that Aristotle regards intoxication and the like as such hindrances, strictly speaking a drunk geometer does not have a potentiality for using his knowledge.³⁸ What is more, Aristotle also specified the absence of external hindrances in defining his notion of second potentiality in *DA* II.5:

1. We can speak of something as a knower either as when we say that man is a knower, meaning that man falls within the class of beings that know or have knowledge, or as when we are speaking of a man who possesses a knowledge of grammar; each of these has a potentiality, but not in the same way: the one because his kind or matter is such and such, the other because he can reflect when he wants to, *if nothing external prevents him*. And there is the man who is already reflecting—he is a knower in actuality and in the most proper sense is knowing, e.g. this A.
2. Both the former are potential knowers, who realise their respective potentialities, the one by a change of quality, i.e. repeated transitions from one state to its opposite under instruction, the other in another way by the transition from the inactive possession of arithmetic or grammar to their active exercise. (Arist. *DA* II.5.417a22-b2, tr. Smith, *Revised Oxford Translation*, my emphasis)

These strict definitions constitute the limits within which Philoponus has to locate the potentiality of the writing tablet. First potentiality is excluded because the theory of recollection demands the presence of innate knowl-

³⁸ Cf. *Phys.* VII.3.247b13-16.

edge; second potentiality is excluded because of Aristotle's stipulation concerning the absence of external hindrances, whereas Philoponus supposes the descended soul to suffer from such a hindrance. If the state of the descended soul is to be recognised in the potentiality of the writing tablet, Aristotle's notion of potentiality needs some extension.

We have seen that Philoponus makes room for the potentiality he requires by employing the concept of latitude.³⁹ However, in the *Metaphysics* Aristotle does not seem to cater for a latitude of potentiality at all. Indeed he expressly raises the problem what stage in the development of a human being we may call a human being in potentiality. He clearly denies that earth, sperm, or even a later stage are rightly called thus and he rejects similar ranges in artificial production and the production of health.⁴⁰ Yet Philoponus uses these very examples to establish his latitude of first potentiality (see above p. 175).

However, in the *De generatione animalium* Aristotle has a different approach. He defends the position that semen at the same time *possesses* soul and *is* soul potentially by pointing out that a potentiality may be nearer or further from its corresponding actualisation. Again the sleeping geometer enters the stage.

Has the semen soul, or not? The same argument applies here as in the question concerning the parts. As no part, if it participate not in soul, will be a part except homonymously (as the eye of a dead man is still called an eye), so no soul will exist in anything except that of which it is soul; it is plain therefore that semen both has soul, and is soul, potentially.

But a thing existing potentially may be nearer or further from its realisation in actuality, just as a sleeping geometer is further away than one awake and the latter than one actually studying. Accordingly it is not any part that is the cause of the soul's coming into being, but it is the first moving cause from outside. (For nothing generates itself, though when it has come into being it thenceforward increases itself.) Hence it is that only one part comes into being first and not all of them together. (Arist. *GA* II.1.735a4-15, tr. A. Platt, *Revised Oxford Translation*)

Here Aristotle himself envisages a range of potentiality stretching from the semen to a full-grown rational adult, and he compares this range to a range of potentiality stretching from a state of sleep to full second actuality. We may conclude that there is supporting material in Aristotle for speaking of a latitude of potentiality⁴¹—even though there is no association with impediments. For Aristotle these ranges are an expression of the more general notion of the more and less which can be found in all areas of his thought as a fundamental way to understand the division of a genus into different spe-

³⁹ For the role of latitude in Philoponus' physics, see De Haas (1997) 153-164.

⁴⁰ So *Metaph.* IX.7.1048b37-9a24: strictly speaking a potentiality is present when no other changes with other causes are needed before it can be actualised.

⁴¹ See also *Metaph.* V.11 esp. 1018b9-11, 22-26.

cies.⁴² However, Philoponus nowhere refers to the *GA* II.1 passage explicitly, and since the nature of his familiarity with Aristotle's biological works is a subject that requires further research, we can only speculate to what extent he was aware of this particular text.⁴³

At this point we may turn to other quarters of Philoponus' corpus of Aristotelian commentaries for help. So far we have only considered the latitude of potentiality within the context of the *De anima*, but for Philoponus it has found other applications in Aristotle as well. The prime case is the concept of mixture as explained in *De generatione et corruptione* I.10 and II.7.⁴⁴

Aristotle famously claimed that ingredients are preserved in a mixture in a state of potentiality which he did not clearly define (*GC* I.10.327b21-31). Philoponus believes that for Aristotle this state of the ingredients is a state of reduced disposition: both their forms and their characteristic qualities are preserved, though in a tempered mode. This temperance is a loss of pure actuality, and may be compared with the state of the drunk geometer who is trying to use his dispositional knowledge:

But the water and the wine are disposed in the mixture in the way in which a geometer who is drunk and trying to do geometry is in actuality with respect to his disposition, though not purely. For each is actual in the mixture in a tempered mode (κεκολασμένως ἐνεργεῖ). So in this way both are preserved in potentiality though neither is preserved in actuality as it was originally. For their pure actuality has been tempered, and is not as it was before they were mixed. (Philop. in *GC* 188.21-26)

In the context of the mixtures of the four elements it becomes clear that Philoponus himself disagrees with this interpretation of Aristotle in so far as the *forms* of the elements are concerned. For him any change of degree in the qualities will cause the corruption of the forms to make room for the new form of the mixture. Yet, the *qualities* of the elements persist in reduced actuality in the mixture. As the example of the drunk geometer shows, the potentiality that the qualities in the mixture possess turns out to be the same potentiality we have encountered in relation to recollection:

1. So there is a different sense of 'in potentiality' (ἕτερον τι τοῦ δυνάμει σημαίνον) next to the usual ones, which Aristotle also turns out to have mentioned in the seventh book of the *Physics*.

⁴² See e.g. *GA* 761b14-15. A general survey of this notion with emphasis on the biological works is provided by Lennox (1987). The more and less enjoys increasing popularity in Neoplatonic circles because it is regarded as a manifestation of the over-arching principles of Limit and Unlimited. I intend to study this Neoplatonic aspect of Philoponus' account in a paper provisionally entitled "More and Less in the Neoplatonic Commentaries on Aristotle's *Categories*", in preparation.

⁴³ It should be noted that the passage quoted above derives from the general context in which Aristotle speaks of the rational soul as entering the human being 'from without' (*GA* II.3.736b13-29), which is obviously very pertinent to discussions of the *De anima* in Late Antiquity.

⁴⁴ Philoponus' notion of mixture is studied in more detail in De Haas (1999).

2. That there is indeed a different sense is clear from the following. ['In potentiality'] in virtue of capacity (ἐπιτηδειότης) and in virtue of disposition (ἔξις) are the extremes, but everything in between is something different, for instance the change of a house in the process of being generated. For the house that is being built is not 'in potentiality' in the way that the stones and timber are a house in potentiality. Nor is a developing embryo a human being in potentiality in the same way as semen is; nor is a child that has the age for learning a grammarian in potentiality in the same way as a new-born baby is, nor in the same way as when the child is already learning. In this domain the range is vast: part is closer to the form, part at a further distance. (Philop. *in GC* 271.14-24)

Here, too, a third kind of potentiality is identified, and located on a range between mere first potentiality and fully-fledged second potentiality. Here, too, examples from the contexts of growth and learning serve to support the existence of such a range. In so far as the mixed state of the qualities constitutes a special mode of existence, the third kind of potentiality has to be delineated as something of its own kind in opposition to the extremes of capacity and disposition. At the same time it cannot do without reference to these extremes if the ingredients are to be separable from the mixture again as Aristotle requires. All in all, the situation of ingredients in a mixture is much like that of the descended soul which, at least initially, operates in an impure mode but is capable of regaining the quality of its previous existence.

The rather vague reference to the seventh book of Aristotle's *Physics* (§1) proves to be important.⁴⁵ In *Phys.* VII.3 we find a passage about potentiality that lends itself easily to a Platonic interpretation in terms of recollection. The general aim of *Phys.* VII.3 is to try and prove that only changes in affective qualities constitute alteration, as part of Aristotle's first attempt at the larger project of reducing all change to one type of change (locomotion) in order to arrive a single first cause, the First Unmoved Mover.⁴⁶ Changes in members of the category of quality other than affective qualities, such as shape and disposition, turn out not to be alterations at all.⁴⁷ Here we are mainly interested in the discussion of changes of intellectual disposition.

At *Phys.* VII.3.247b13-8a6 Aristotle comments on the case of intoxication: when someone who is drunk, asleep, or ill changes to the opposite state, he is not said to have *become* a knower all over again, even though he

⁴⁵ Vitelli, the editor of Philoponus' *in GC*, suggests *Phys.* VII.3.245b9 ff. as the passage involved. The sequel will show that the passage 247b13-8a9 is more relevant.

⁴⁶ The status of *Physics* VII has been a matter of dispute in modern scholarship, see e.g. Verbeke (1971), Wardy (1990). In Antiquity its position was also debated: Simplicius, whose commentary on the book has survived, provides a defence of its authenticity and its position in the *Physics* as a whole against contemporary doubts, *Simpl. in Phys.* 1036.8-1037.10.

⁴⁷ For the reception of *Phys.* VII.3 in Simplicius' theory of change see Croese (1998) 169-181.

was unable to use his knowledge before.⁴⁸ He compares this change to the original acquisition of the disposition of knowledge, which is not a *becoming* of knowledge either. For the latter is the result of the soul's coming to rest, and strictly speaking coming to rest is not a change.⁴⁹ Both in the case of knowledge acquisition and in the case of recovering from drunkenness, sleep or illness, certain corporeal alterations are necessary conditions for these changes to occur, whereas the changes themselves are not strictly alterations.

In the scanty remains of Philoponus' comments on *Phys.* VII.3 preserved in Greek and Arabic⁵⁰ we find his theory of potentiality illustrated with the case of intoxication. At 877.19-27 of the Greek epitome the initial "acquisition of knowledge" (247b10) is interpreted as "the movement of the potentiality, the possession of which renders us capable (ἐπιτήδειοι) of also acquiring the disposition". Young children cannot even begin to learn due to their restlessness which is caused by strong natural forces that wish to bring the child to completion. First potentiality is acquired only when their body comes to rest, and therefore without a change in the soul itself.⁵¹ From the Arabic paraphrase we know that Philoponus illustrated this change with a comparison with intoxicated and sleeping persons.⁵² In them, too, a physical restlessness acts as an impediment to a capacity, i.e. the second potentiality to know and act in accordance with the knowledge they possess all along. They become knowing either by instruction or 'by their own nature', which Philoponus glosses as the things that are known by intuition. This gloss brings us close to the notion of recollection.⁵³ Clearer traces of recollection theory are found in Philoponus' commentary at 247b5:

⁴⁸ Elsewhere Aristotle used the image of a drunk person to illustrate the state of the incontinent man (ἀκρατής) who possesses moral knowledge but still does evil because he is overcome by passion (*EN* VII.3.1147a10-24). He resembles people who are asleep, drunk, or mad. Like actors who reproduce their speech they do not fully *know* what they are saying. In this way the incontinent man may know and yet not know at the same time. In *Magna Moralia* II.6.17 it is added that if he gets rid of the passion he will be himself again, in the same way as a person who is overcome by intoxication does not altogether lose his reason and knowledge but will be himself again when he has sobered up. For a discussion of these texts see Gosling (1993).

⁴⁹ See Arist. *Phys.* VI.8.

⁵⁰ The Arabic paraphrase is preserved in a Leiden manuscript, MS Leiden Or. 583, and now available in an English translation by Paul Lettinck (1994), to which I refer.

⁵¹ Cf. Procl. in *Tim.* III.349.19-350.8 (I owe this reference to Richard Sorabji).

⁵² See 770.23-771.3 (p. 124 Lettinck), and 771.11-14 (p. 125 Lettinck). The Arabic text elaborates on other kinds of physical change as well: "Furthermore, those who frequently attend lectures on the disciplines of knowledge get lean and dry bodies, which results in their <not> easily becoming annoyed. Also, if there were not those alterations and affections connected with the body, we would not be able to explain the expressions in the face of someone showing that he has understood what we say and the other expressions showing that he has not understood us" (771.21-772.3, p. 125 Lettinck).

⁵³ Simpl. in *Phys.* VII.3.247b13, 1078.18-1079.34 provides a close parallel to this argument.

When he starts to judge that this white [thing] dilates the visual ray, and then another and another, as if aroused by them towards his own innate reason-principles, [he will judge that] every white [thing] dilates the visual rays, and when reason comes to rest and stands still because it is no longer strongly moved by them, he also proclaims the same about the white [things] he does not know.⁵⁴ (Philop. in *Phys.* 877.1-6)

The appearance of particulars gives rise to knowledge because induction, however incomplete it may be, suffices to arouse the innate reason-principles: it suffices for recollection.⁵⁵ The knowledge of the universal is warranted on account of the recollection of the innate reason-principle, not, of course, on account of the incomplete induction. Interestingly, reason (διάνοια) itself is said to be disturbed by sense perception, even though Aristotle concluded that intellectual dispositions arise after alterations of either the body or the sensible part of the soul (*Phys.* VII.3.248a6-9).

These traces of recollection theory may be compared with Simplicius' comments on *Phys.* VII.3, esp. in *Phys.* 1075.4-20 and 1079.6-34. He exploits *Phys.* VII.3 to oppose Alexander who believes that at *Phys.* 247b5 Aristotle is talking of concept formation by means of generalising over particulars.⁵⁶ Simplicius objects that the number of particulars is infinite, so that in this case the induction is necessarily incomplete and cannot yield true knowledge. Therefore innate knowledge is indispensable. Hence, Aristotle's 'initial acquisition of knowledge' has to be glossed as a coming to rest of the lower parts of the soul from the disturbances it suffered during its incarnation. On this interpretation Aristotle is quite in line with Plato's account of the experiences of the soul in the body as described in *Tim.* 43A6-4C4, from which Simplicius draws a number of quotations (1077.5-23).⁵⁷

If we combine the information from Philoponus and Simplicius we may surmise that in an attempt to reconcile Platonic recollection with Aristotle's *Physics* Philoponus and Simplicius compare the intellectual state of young children with that of intoxicated or sleeping persons. Although children possess innate knowledge they do not even have the first potentiality to learn (i.e. to recollect) because of the disturbing influence of the incarnation. Their restlessness acts as an impediment which has to be removed by natural

⁵⁴ Cf. *Tim.* 67E for the theory of vision employed here. For Philoponus' criticism of a rival view see in *DA* 325.19 ff. (I owe this reference to Sylvia Berryman).

⁵⁵ The same reasoning is reflected in the Arabic paraphrase at 769.25-770.2 (p. 123 Lettinck).

⁵⁶ In his commentary on Arist. *Cat.* 5, 2a24-26 Simplicius launched a massive attack on Alexander's view of universals (esp. in *Cat.* 82.6-85.33), for which see briefly my translation of Simplicius in *Cat.* 5 with introduction and notes, forthcoming in the Ancient Commentators on Aristotle translation series edited by Richard Sorabji, and more elaborately my paper 'Universals of Unique Particulars', in preparation.

⁵⁷ Simplicius' account of recollection differs from that of Philoponus in a number of interesting ways. However, a detailed comparison is beyond the scope of this paper. Simplicius does not use this third kind of potentiality in the context of mixture because he sides with Proclus in rejecting Aristotle's account of mixture altogether, for which see De Haas (1999).

changes of the body or the soul. In the same way intoxicated or sleeping persons do not have the second potentiality to use their knowledge because the restlessness that results from their state acts as an impediment. Only when they have recovered are they able to exercise their knowledge. Intoxication and sobering up are alterations that do not affect the innate knowledge which resides in the human intellect.

Now we are in a position to see why Philoponus is so confident that the solution he offers for the interpretation of the image of the writing tablet is thoroughly in agreement with Aristotle. For him the image of the writing tablet employs a notion of potentiality he believed Aristotle had also employed in the context of mixture, and more generally in the context of separating the generation of intellectual dispositions from the process of alteration that necessarily precedes it. The descent of the soul presents us with an impediment similar to intoxication or sleep. Recollection occurs only when the impediment is removed as sobering up or awakening must occur before one has full command again of the knowledge one possesses. Since it is the active intellect of the teacher that performs the crucial task of removing the impediment, we always owe thanks to him.

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CHAPTER SEVEN

PLATO AND THE FABULOUS COSMOLOGY OF
WILLIAM OF CONCHES

WILLEMEN OTTEN

1. Prologue

Of the studies that deal with medieval Platonism, many concern themselves with the transmission of Platonic ideas in this period. One of the questions that arises in this context is which brand of Platonism has left the greatest imprint on the medieval period: was it Middle Platonism or Neoplatonism? Other questions may relate to the various authors who served as vehicles for the dissemination of Platonic ideas. Was Augustine more important than Boethius in this respect, or was the impact of Platonism even more effective when it was mediated through rather more indirect, if not obscure channels? One could think here of the works of Johannes Scottus Eriugena (ca. 810–ca. 877) which were always perceived as rather difficult, only to become condemned much later on, in the thirteenth century.¹ On a broader scale, it is the encounter between Platonism and Christianity that has attracted interest, especially the question to what extent Platonism influenced or shaped the intellectual culture of medieval Christianity. One should think here not only of such basic metaphysical problems as the nature of evil and the origin of the universe, but also of those of a more general nature such as the discrepancy between fragmented reality on the one hand and its avowed rootedness in the principle of goodness on the other. Since early Christianity had striven hard to develop answers of its own to fundamental metaphysical problems, absorbing in the process many Platonic ideas, one needs to find out whether the Platonism that was received in the Middle Ages added something new to the Christian repertory as it had become established.

Since in all of the above cases the emphasis is on the Platonic tradition as it developed over time, the picture that tends to arise is one that regards medieval Platonism as only tangentially related to its centre and source, i.e., Plato himself. While the observation of a chronological distance between Plato and his medieval successors is on the one hand simply a side-effect of

¹ See below n. 11.

any historical approach, accepting this distance at face-value runs counter to what any good historian of medieval Platonism wishes to do, that is, to convey the thrill that many writers experienced in (re)discovering Plato and communicating him to their audience. To bring out this latter point the present article shall focus not so much on the factual transmission of Platonic ideas—as this tends to highlight what was lost over time—but rather on what may have attracted medieval writers to the reading of Plato in the first place. What is it that they possibly stood to gain when they added Plato to the canon of biblical and patristic writers traditionally consulted during the course of their intellectual debates?

While throughout early Christianity and into the early Middle Ages Plato had been a well-known and revered figure, the heated debates of the twelfth century clearly testify to a new interest in this ancient author. Consequently, the main focus of this article will be on this period. Central figure in my discussion will be William of Conches. William was both a grammarian and a philosopher of nature and has traditionally been associated with the so-called School of Chartres.² Of all the authors interested in Plato, it is William who best embodies the image of Plato that most early medieval authors seemed to have had. For them he was before all an insightful cosmologist who, in a rather remarkable choice, had chosen to communicate with his audience through fiction. The dominant reason for their view was undoubtedly that their knowledge of Plato was more or less limited to the *Timaeus*.

2. Introduction to the Platonism of William of Conches (ca. 1085-1154)

Alongside Peter Abelard, the more enigmatic twelfth-century author William of Conches is considered one of the first true intellectuals of the Middle Ages. Being among the first medieval thinkers to try his hand at a purely rational explanation of things, more precisely of the structure of the universe, he can be regarded as a full-time professional philosopher.³ Like Abelard, William was a professor who greatly impressed his students, which resulted in comments that express unconditional admiration.⁴ Born in Normandy at the end of the eleventh century, he probably started his long

² The existence of a School of Chartres has been quite controversial in the field of medieval studies. R.W. Southern has been its most vocal opponent. See Southern (1995) 58-101. Rather than not using the term at all, I use it merely to identify a group of authors with like-minded philosophical-poetic interests. See Otten (1995) 267-272.

³ See ch. 1: The Birth of the Intellectuals, esp. the role of Chartres in Le Goff (1993) 48-61. On the career of William of Conches, see Jeauneau (1995) 41-50.

⁴ See John of Salisbury, *Metalogicon* I, 5 (ed. Hall, p. 20). John calls him: "Willelmus de Conchis grammaticus post Bernardum Carnotensem opulentissimus."

teaching career at the cathedral school of Chartres in the 1120s.⁵ Between 1144–1149 he can be found at the court of Geoffrey le Bel (or Plantagenet), Duke of Normandy and Count of Anjou, where he composed his most famous and insightful work, the *Dragmaticon Philosophiae*.⁶ With Abelard, finally, William also shares the dubitable honor of having been singled out for a vicious case of character-assassination by William of St. Thierry,⁷ the academic spy to Bernard of Clairvaux. As is well-known, Bernard was the religious leader not just of the Cistercians but of the entire twelfth century world of Christian politics.

From a contemporary perspective, one can easily understand why modern historians such as Jacques Le Goff lavish enthusiastic praise on medieval intellectuals like Peter Abelard and William of Conches, as they seem to display an undiluted rationalism. Furthermore, from a medieval perspective one can perhaps also understand why Abelard's arrogant self-confidence, so manifest in the autobiographical description of his career, made him a likely victim for those Christian leaders for whom religious piety was inseparably coupled with intellectual humility.⁸ But it is substantially more difficult to grasp why William of Conches became the focus of such unwelcome attention by William of St. Thierry. After all, one of the points that the latter criticized him for, i.e., the unorthodox identification of Plato's World Soul in the *Timaeus* with the Christian Holy Spirit, represents a position that about a decade later never raised any serious problems for his younger contemporary Thierry of Chartres. Thierry was even more prominently associated with the famous twelfth-century cathedral school of Chartres than William—hence his name—, as he was its chancellor between 1142 and 1150. One of the possible reasons why Thierry may have escaped criticism is that his equation of the World Soul with the third person of the Trinity occurred in a more responsible setting, namely in a commentary on the book of Genesis.⁹ In this respect Thierry's commentary stands in marked contrast with

⁵ See William of Conches, *Glosae super Platonem*, ed. Jeaneau, p. 10 and Jeaneau (1995) 43–44. We are not entirely sure that William actually taught at Chartres, but it seems more likely that he taught there than in Paris.

⁶ William's move from the cathedral school to the court was probably inspired by controversy, see Jeaneau (1995) 44–45 and Cadden (1995). The text of William's *Dragmaticon Philosophiae* was edited as *Dialogus de substantiis physicis* by G. Gratarolus in 1567 and reprinted in Frankfurt in 1967. In 1997 it became available in a critical edition in the series *Corpus Christianorum Continuatio Mediaevalis*. I will henceforth refer to this edition by I. Ronca. A translation of this new Latin text has been published by Ronca and Curr under the title *William of Conches. A Dialogue on Natural Philosophy (Dragmaticon Philosophiae)*.

⁷ For William of St. Thierry's criticism of Abelard and William of Conches as expressed in his letters to Bernard of Clairvaux, see Leclercq (1969).

⁸ Abelard was notorious for his arrogance, especially in his disputes with his masters William of Champeaux and Anselm of Laon. For examples, see his *Historia calamitatum*, ed. Monfrin, *passim*.

⁹ See Thierry's *Tractatus de sex dierum operibus* chs. 25–27, ed. Häring, pp. 566–567. For a discussion of this work, see Otten (1995) 272–276. On Thierry's overall career, see the essay on Thierry in Dronke (1988) and Jeaneau (1995) 61–72. Since Abelard's identification of the

William's youthful *Philosophia*. It is in this work, much more than in his later and more balanced *Dragmaticon Philosophiae*, that William plays up his own competence as a philosopher by setting it off against what he perceives to be the ignorance on the part of his colleagues.¹⁰

While the early Middle Ages had witnessed some remarkable experiments of independent, rational speculation, as demonstrated by the examples of Johannes Scottus Eriugena or Anselm of Canterbury (1033-1109),¹¹ the unusual method that William of Conches propagated with such flair and tenacity yielded a more fateful result. It put him in an unflattering spotlight for his later attacker William of St. Thierry. It is William's method, therefore, that I intend to explore, as it confers a unique character on all of his writings. In contradistinction to William's reputable record as an important natural scientist, this article wants to shed a different light on his works. Its chief goal is to demonstrate that the rational exterior of William's presentation draws on a kind of literary and allegorical subtlety that is almost the opposite of discursive argumentation and causal rationality, based as it is on a sophisticated process of evocation and imagination. This puts William more in the company of his twelfth-century literary peers, such as Bernard Silvestris and Alan of Lille, than that it isolates him as a forerunner of the *scientia naturalis* of his thirteenth-century successors.¹²

The difference between these two historical views of William is determined in large part on how one assesses the presence and importance of Plato in his works. It is my view that the reading of Plato was crucial for William, for it awakened in him the enthusiasm and insight needed to combine two very different strands of discourse: the compelling force of rational argument with the delicate technique of unveiling Platonic myth. While it is true that William's age witnessed a growing divergence between these two modes of arguing, the gap was just beginning to widen to become unbridgeable only by the thirteenth.

World-Soul and the Holy Spirit was censured in 1140 at the council of Sens, Häring dates Thierry's treatise before 1140, yet based on internal textual evidence Dronke and others favour a later date. If this later date is to be accepted, it may well have been that the controversy had simply died down.

¹⁰ The text of William's early work has been edited, translated and commented on by Gregor Maurach in 1980. William opens his work on a polemical note by accusing many "masters who call themselves philosophers" of ignorance. Most of all, he sees them as unable to link *eloquentia* with *sapientia* after the example of Cicero. William's equation of the World Soul and the Holy Spirit is found in *Philosophia* I, III §12 - IV §13, ed. Maurach, pp. 22-23. For his specific definition of philosophy, see below n. 19.

¹¹ One naturally thinks here of Eriugena's *Periphyseon* (On the Division of Nature), dated around 862-866, and Anselm's *Proslogion*, dated around 1077-78. Eriugena's comprehensive philosophy of nature was condemned in 1225, when pope Honorius III ordered all extant copies to be sent to Rome to be burnt.

¹² In this respect my approach differs from that by Speer (1995) 130-221 (ch. 4: Die dynamische Ordnung der natürlichen Welt) and is closer to Dronke (1974) 1. For Bernard Silvestris and Alan of Lille, see Jaeger (1994) 278-291.

But this article wants to do more than analyse why William opted for this peculiar method, in which he combined scientific rationality and literary subtlety. It also wants to analyse why this method, which William must have devised to be elucidating and constructive, became interpreted instead as undermining Christian doctrine. In order to do so the article shall focus on three different aspects of this complex problem. I shall first bring out the pivotal role of Plato's *Timaeus* as freshly stimulating twelfth century, esp. Chartrian, speculation on the universe of nature. It is my view that, as a rolemodel for intellectuals, Plato was vitally important because he embodied a new approach which was not only more systematic but also self-reflexive in a deliberate way. Second, I shall pay close attention to the literary dimensions of William's regard for and reception of Plato. After all, the texts of this pagan author had to be properly "deconstructed" before they could in any way qualify as relevant and authoritative for the Christian intellectuals who populated twelfth-century France. Third and last, the article shall attempt to explain how William was able to fuse his scientific analysis with his literary interpretation in such a way as to produce a cosmology which was rationally sound, if not widely accepted. While this cosmology was clearly independent of any authority—be it scriptural, patristic or even Platonic—, in the opinion of the present author (as obviously in William's own) it need not therefore be seen as contrary to Christian teaching.¹³ Whether or not William of St.Thierry's negative judgment was justified may in the end remain a matter of choice or "opinion", to put it in Platonic terms. But that it was ultimately misguided, inasmuch as it failed to take the variegated nature of William's methodology into account, is a matter I hope to make sufficiently clear in what follows.

I. The importance of Plato's Timaeus for William's cosmology

Although Plato's *Timaeus* had been known throughout the early Middle Ages, it seems in the twelfth century a new level of appreciation of both this work and its author developed. This brought the study of the *Timaeus* to new heights.¹⁴ In between the composition of his early *Philosophia* and his later *Dragmaticon*, therefore, William of Conches sat down to compose his *Glosae super Platonem* which deal with precisely this favoured Platonic text.¹⁵ The specific reason for its popularity was that the *Timaeus*, which was

¹³ In *Philosophia* I, III §22, ed. Maurach, p. 22, William asks not to be deemed a heretic because the things he says cannot be found in any written authority. He states: "Non enim quia scriptum non est, haeresis est, sed si contra fidem est."

¹⁴ See M. Gibson, "The Study of the 'Timaeus' in the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries," *Pensiero* 25 (1969) 183-194, reprinted in Gibson (1993).

¹⁵ See E. Jeaneau (ed.), *Guillaume de Conches. Glosae super Platonem*. For the place of his glosses on the *Timaeus* in William's entire oeuvre, see ed. Jeaneau, p. 14.

only partially known in the Middle Ages (until 53C) and inevitably read through the lens of its late antique translator and commentator Calcidius,¹⁶ was to become this century's primary resource for cosmological speculation. As William explains it, Plato's *Republic* had dealt with positive justice, after which the *Timaeus* concentrated on natural justice, that is, on the creation of the world. Hence this would be his central theme of discussion.¹⁷ Given the twelfth century's deep-rooted interest in the natural world and its concomitant enthusiasm for the arts of the quadrivium—the long-neglected sciences of arithmetic, geometry, music and astronomy—,¹⁸ one can understand why the text of the *Timaeus* became the subject of such intense scrutiny.

William's own interest in the *Timaeus* seemed to flow forth more specifically from a remarkable but coincidental coming together of different developments. In addition to the surge of interest in cosmological speculation, for which a debate on the *Timaeus* served as a perfect outlet, and to Plato's newly refreshed reputation as the most venerable of ancient philosophers, it was William's specific definition of philosophy that appears to have attracted him to the *Timaeus*. The attraction of the *Timaeus* was so great that he saw this text as a more adequate source to guide him in his study of the universe than even its most sacred Christian counterpart: the book of Genesis. What then was William's definition of philosophy?

In his early work *Philosophia* William defined philosophy as: "the true comprehension of the things that are and are not seen and those that are and are seen."¹⁹ This definition was not unique to William, as it goes back to the opening of Boethius' *De institutione arithmeticae*. But in the twelfth century Boethius' words began to play into a new sensitivity. Propelled by the urge to grasp the structure of nature, this sensitivity tended to associate true being specifically with the existence of things unseen. It is on this particular point, i.e., a thirst for an understanding of the things unseen, that the *Timaeus* seems to have provided the scholars of the twelfth century with a far more rewarding source than the biblical book of Genesis. Whereas the *Timaeus* contained knowledge about such invisible entities as the World Soul, Genesis touches on invisible reality only rarely. A notable exception may be the fact that in its account of the second day of creation Genesis makes mention of the waters above the firmament. It may well be for this very reason, i.e. their invisibility, that these waters became such a great source of exegetical curiosity in the twelfth century.²⁰ The phenomenon of these unseen waters

¹⁶ In his edition of the gloss, Jeaneau reveals that William relies comparatively little on Calcidius' commentary. See *Glosae super Platonem*, ed. Jeaneau, p. 27.

¹⁷ See *Glosae super Platonem* ch. 3, ed. Jeaneau, p. 59.

¹⁸ On the natural speculation of the early twelfth century, see Stock (1972) and Stock (1978). Cf. also Stiefel (1985). See further Wetherbee (1988), Gregory (1988), Burnett (1988).

¹⁹ See *Philosophia* I, I §4, ed. Maurach, p. 18: ... eorum quae sunt et non videntur, et eorum quae sunt et videntur vera comprehensio.

²⁰ See Rodnite Lemay (1977) 226-236.

above the firmament led Peter Abelard, who was never much of a natural scientist to begin with, to such desperation that he gave up on trying to define their usefulness altogether. Since they are simply not useful, there is also no reason why God should be praised for them. According to Abelard's commentary on the so-called *Hexaemeron*, this is why Moses did not include the typical closing phrase "and God saw that it was good" in rounding off his description of the second day of creation.²¹

How different is the reaction of William of Conches, especially when we compare it to Abelard's dismissive statement! Far from arbitrarily assuming divine error, he takes the very invisibility of the supracelestial waters as a reason to inspect the laws of physical causality even more closely. William also rejects the idea that these waters were frozen, as the venerable Bede had suggested in an earlier attempt to explain how it is that they did not flow down. For William, Bede's solution was totally out of the question, because the firmament would certainly have collapsed under the weight of the ice. Instead he hypothesizes that what we are dealing with here are evaporated waters or, in other words, plain air.²²

In the present author's opinion, William's preference for things unseen is also the driving force behind his modification of the theory of elements. Whereas in the traditional view the four elements of which the world consisted, i.e., water, fire, earth and air, were considered more or less identical with the visible elements that one observed, William was among the first to make a distinction between the elements as invisible, physical principles and their well-known visible qualities. It is precisely because they are manifest that the visible elements cannot be identical with the ultimate particles of which all reality is made.²³ For William, visible water, air, fire and earth are more properly called *elementata* instead of *elementa*. Each visible element contains a mixture of all four invisible elements, with one of the elements dominating over the others. Thus visible earth contains the elements water,

²¹ See Peter Abelard, *Expositio in Hexaemeron*, Patrologia Latina 178: 740A.

²² See *Philosophia* II, I-II, ed. Maurach, pp. 41-44. William's discussion of the waters above the firmament derives from his larger discussion of the four elements, as the supracelestial waters are located in the region of the upper air or aether, which consists of fire. He rejects the literal interpretation of Gen. 1:7 that God separated the waters above the firmament from those below the firmament as *contra rationem*, see *Philosophia* II, I §3.

²³ See *Glosae super Platonem*, chs. 58-60, ed. Jeaneau, pp. 128-131. Rather than espousing an Epicurean position by supporting an atomistic conception of the universe, William embraces the definition of the *Pantegni* of Constantinus Africanus (d. 1087; Constantine translated medical works from Arabic into Latin; through Constantine William also appears to have undergone the influence of Galen): *elementum est simpla et minima alicuius corporis particula, simpla ad qualitatem, minima ad quantitatem*. Cf. also *Philosophia* I, VII, ed. Maurach, pp. 26-30 and *Dragmaticon* I.6.6, ed. Ronca, p. 25. Since elements have a simple quality and minimal quantity, they are unlike atoms, because the elements differ from one another in quality. Cf. Dijksterhuis (1961) 119-123. NB. Just as in William's physical theory there can be no contradiction in each of the elements (cf. *Glosae*, ch. 58: *pars simpla, cuius non sunt contrarie qualitates*), so in William's theory of interpretation the contradiction between the various levels of interpretation of Plato's myth is excluded (see section II below).

air, fire and earth. But it appears to us as earth because the element of earth prevails over the others. The *elementa* on the other hand, as distinguished from the *elementata*, have a much greater degree of purity, a purity which William naturally comes to associate with their invisibility. While their rationally abstract status facilitates their being understood, it precludes their being observed by ordinary human eyes.

The two issues mentioned above bring us closer to uncovering what William stood to gain by incorporating Boethius' definition of philosophy ("the comprehension of the things that are and are not seen and the things that are and are seen") and using the *Timaeus* as his paradigmatic source to elaborate on it. In my opinion, this definition enabled William to make progress in his systematic investigation of the universe on two counts. First, operating on the Platonic premise that unseen reality ranks higher in the hierarchy of nature than visible manifestation, William appears to consider non-visibility primarily as a mystery which can inspire him to search for a deeper truth. Since this deeper truth must be an intelligible one, it can serve to clarify the workings of nature on the level of cause rather than effect.²⁴ The scientist or philosopher is to arrive at this level of higher truths by abstracting from the visible effects to their invisible causes. It almost seems as if through scientific analysis one can recapitulate God's original act of creation by tracing his divine steps in reverse order. This may also explain why William ends his *Philosophia* with the familiar saying that one goes from the cognition of the creature to that of the Creator, for in his view philosophy must culminate in the study of the divine page or Scripture.²⁵ All things considered, knowledge of God still remains the highest goal for this twelfth century Christian-Platonic scientist.

While the *Timaeus* contains ample knowledge about visible things, its strength is that it offers William an insight into invisible reality, an area of knowledge about which Genesis kept mostly silent. In *Timaeus* (29D-30D; 32C-34B) Plato explains how God, by means of a demiurge, came to fashion the world as a living animal, endowing it moreover with a Soul. This presentation of unseen reality as a living organism endowed with reason and

²⁴ Applied to the theory of elements, this means that the *elementa* are seen as invisible causes, although they are created by God, while the *elementata* are seen as the effects of these causes rather than the product of a direct divine creation. It is interesting to note that William does not assume a discontinuity between the levels of cause and effect. Thus he rejects the view of some twelfth-century thinkers, whom he sees as misrepresenting Plato (*Timaeus* 30A and 43A), that God first created the (invisible) elements in random positions (*inordinata iactatio*). Only then did he decide in his goodness to arrange them in any kind of order. For William God indeed assigned the lowest position to earth, but in doing so he merely built on its innate quality, since as the heaviest element earth naturally tended to move downwards. He also assigned the highest position to fire, because it shows an upward motion. For William, therefore, God acted through anticipation rather than correction, for there never existed any kind of *inordinata iactatio* of elements. See *Philosophia* I, XI, ed. Maurach, pp. 33-36 and *Glosae super Platonem*, chs. 50-53, ed. Jeaneau, pp. 118-123.

²⁵ See *Philosophia* IV, XXXIII §58, ed. Maurach, p. 116.

soul plays into another Chartrian sensitivity, namely the parallelism of micro- and macrocosm. This is the second count on which it seems the *Timaeus* allows William to make progress in his philosophical investigation. In describing the world as a living organism, the cosmology of the *Timaeus* supplies William with a model that enables him to align his investigation of the universe with that of human nature. Both the universe and humans have a body made of four elements.²⁶ In addition, both have a soul. Since they both consist of corporeal and incorporeal parts, of things seen and unseen so to speak, it is not until body and soul become combined that they qualify as the prime subject-matter of philosophy for William.

In exploring the analogy between the cosmos as macrocosm and the human person as microcosm, William pushes their similarity of structure almost to its extreme. Not only are the body of the universe and the human body made of identical elements, which allows for their detailed comparison, but even the pattern according to which these elements are arranged is identical: namely that of *conjunctio*. Following Plato, William holds that contrary elements cannot be conjoined without a medium, since this would destroy their harmony. Due to the three-dimensional proportions of the cosmos, there is need for two mediating elements rather than one. Hence, both air and water are needed in the middle to keep earth and fire from destroying each other, as is reflected in *Timaeus* 32B.²⁷ It is thus no surprise that in the human sphere the concept of *conjunctio* also plays a role of considerable significance. When faced with the question how the human soul is present in the human person, William replies: *conjuncta* (through conjunction). He rejects other alternatives such as *concreta*, *apposita* or *commixta*, as they all reveal unacceptable weaknesses. For example, they fail to exclude the possibility that the soul would be separated from the body, in case the latter sustains an injury.²⁸

Most importantly, William deftly uses the analogy of macro- and microcosm as a shortcut to explain problem areas inside each of their respective realms. In doing so, he does not hesitate to cross from one realm to another.

²⁶ In *Glosae super Platonem* ch. 58, ed. Jeauneau, p. 128. William follows Constantine in connecting the four elements with the four fluids of the human body: *melancolia*, *flegma*, *sanguis* and *colera*. Just as the visible elements are made of all four invisible elements, so the four *humores* of the human body are also made of all four elements.

²⁷ See *Glosae super Platonem* chs. 60-61 and 64, ed. Jeauneau, pp. 130-133 and 136-37. Cf. also *Philosophia* I, IX, ed. Maurach, pp. 30-33. Following Calcidius, William argues on the basis of the different characteristics of the elements here, as they either possess two qualities (e.g. fire is *calidus* and *siccus*, while earth is *frigida* and *sicca*) or consist of a combination of three properties (e.g. fire is *acutus*, *subtilis* and *mobilis*, while earth is *obtusa*, *corpulenta* and *immobilis*). William appears to resort to the last scheme to explain why two mediating elements are needed instead of one. Since the elements cannot exist by themselves, but all things consist of mixed elements, William considers it the primary epistemological task of the intellect to abstract from their mixed form: *vis est intellectus coniuncta disiungere* (*Glosae super Platonem* ch. 170, ed. Jeauneau, p. 280).

²⁸ See *Philosophia* IV, XXVII (*Qualiter anima sit in compositione hominis*), pp. 111-112.

For example, he frequently resorts to explanations in the sphere of human living to find answers for larger cosmological questions and *vice versa*. In an attempt to explain why the stars are made in fire, and not in air, he points out that the element of fire is naturally dry, as opposed to air which contains humidity. The presence of humidity allows a body to thicken, just as potter's clay begins to thicken when put over fire. Obviously this makes it impossible for stars to be made in air.²⁹ As a counterexample we witness how William analyses the psychological characteristics that typify each stage of human life almost exclusively in terms derived from physical processes. As an example we may look at his discussion of intelligence, reason and memory as powers of the human soul. According to William, the undermining effect of original sin has affected the human constitution in such a way that we all need sufficient experience before we can activate their powers. But the extent to which their functioning is adequate is dependent on the growth of the body. The stage of infancy, for example, is characterised by warmth and humidity. This furthers the babies' digestion of food. Because the need for drink induces their discharge of fluids, however, babies tend to generate fumes which destabilise their brain. Hence their power to understand is sharply disrupted.³⁰

Thanks to the *Timaeus* then, William is able to align the universe at large and the human universe contained by it as the product of one and the same God. As a practical consequence following from this theoretical insight, he deems it the specific task of the scientist to make the laws of both macro- and microcosm apparent to the untrained minds of his fellow-scientists and students.³¹ It is thanks to the *Timaeus* also, that William comes to see the universe and human nature more and more as organisms that can experience growth. Hence they do not rely on divine intervention for every new stage of their development. Not only does the cosmos evolve naturally from the four elements -themselves unseen- whose innate tendencies produce the visible elements and bring forth the rest of God's universe, but even the creation of humanity itself no longer needs to be considered the result of a direct divine act. Just as the earth, which was at first very muddy, began spontaneously to create various kinds of animals after it was affected by the boiling heat of fire, so the first man came into being in approximately the same way. First the body of man was formed. It was made of visible earth which, as William states explicitly, contained a mixture of all the elements, but a mixture that was particularly well-balanced. Thus man's body was more perfect than that

²⁹ See *Philosophia* I, XII §41, ed. Maurach, pp. 36-37.

³⁰ See esp. *Philosophia* IV, XXIX, ed. Maurach, pp. 112-114.

³¹ After giving his own description of the stages of human life, William concludes his *Philosophia* with pedagogical remarks concerning the ideal psychological mindset of master and student (*solus amor sapientiae*) and the best order of learning. Thus organic or physical growth and psychological or educational growth are related for him. See *Philosophia* IV, XXXI-XXXIII, ed. Maurach, pp. 114-116.

of the first woman. Since the latter was formed from mud that was lying nearby, it displayed somewhat less of a balance. According to William's metaphorical interpretation, when Genesis states that Eve is formed from Adam's rib, it is this scientific information which it wants to convey.³²

William loyally supports the Christian viewpoint that God furnishes each human with an individual soul, but it is obvious that his scientific mind is drawn much more to the physical process by which man and woman together are capable of multiplying, that is, of producing new humans. With great energy William engages in a detailed description of the growth of the human foetus, of the function of human organs and of the consecutive stages of human life.³³ While he is careful to preserve the possibility that God could decide again to create humans in the original, albeit metaphorical, way recorded in Genesis, he all but rules it out. Obviously, there is no end to the things God can accomplish, for in William's much celebrated example God could even form a calf out of a tree-trunk. But any departure from the physical chain of procreation which was set in motion by Adam and Eve would have to be preceded by a new act of the divine will. And for this William can simply find no motive.³⁴ For him it seems clear that God has ordained the natural birth of children as his preferred way of monitoring creation by delegating his creative power to the so-called *natura operans*.

By *natura operans* William refers to the integrated and animated world of physical creation, located on an intermediate level between the *opus creatoris* and the *opus artificis*. If we could bring William's many-sided admiration for the cosmology of the *Timaeus* under a single heading, it would surely be that of *natura operans*. If anything, Plato has in this work succeeded to lay bare the inner workings of *natura operans*. For William who desires to emulate him, the intricate structure of *natura operans* points not just to the integration of macro- and microcosmos but celebrates above all their divinely ordered harmony. It is clear that he considers the existence

³² See *Philosophia* I, XIII §42-43, ed. Maurach, pp. 37-38: Sed cum terra ex superposita aqua esset lutosa, ex calore bulliens, creavit ex se diversa genera animalium.... Ex quadam vero parte, in qua elementa aequaliter convenerunt, humanum corpus factum est (cf. Gen. 2:7: God created man *ex limo terrae*). Since according to Boethius *omnis aequalitas pauca et finita*, only one human was formed this way. Thus the woman was formed *ex vicino limo terrae* (the creation of woman *ex latere Adae*, cf. Gen. 2:21). See also *Glosae super Platonem* ch. 52, ed. Jeaneau, pp. 121-22.

³³ In *Philosophia* IV, VII, ed. Maurach, p. 95: Sed quoniam de compositione primi hominis et feminae, qualiter ex limo terrae homo factus sit, in primo volumine docuimus, de cotidiana hominis creatione, formatione, nativitate, aetatibus, membris, de officiis et utilitatibus membrorum dicamus. The remainder of Book IV is devoted to this *cotidiana hominis creatio*, which William extends to include even the process of human education.

³⁴ See *Philosophia* I, XIII §44, ed. Maurach, p. 39. For William's "rustic example" of the calf and the tree-trunk, see II, II §5, ed. Maurach, p. 43.

of such a harmony an indispensable precondition for an effectively orchestrated universe.³⁵

2. *Literary dimensions of William's reception of Plato*³⁶

Despite the appeal of the *Timaeus* to twelfth century Chartrian scholars with their dawning interest in cosmological reasoning, as an author Plato had to offer more than just scientific information. In addition to worldly wisdom, he offered rhetorical eloquence. It is precisely because the *Timaeus* teaches science in mythological form that the Chartrian thinkers were so attracted to its author on whom they conferred the highest philosophical credentials. Thus, the most ancient of venerated philosophers became the rolemodel of a new encyclopedic scholarship, in which the new arts of the *quadrivium* became combined with the more traditional ones of the *trivium*.

Just as most Chartrian cosmologists likened the role of visible creation to that of a veil which shrouds and reveals the hidden, invisible causes of things, so they saw the role of Platonic myth in the *Timaeus* as cloaking an inner truth, one which the literary scholar must try to expound. In this regard it is important to make the following point. It is true that William may ultimately have been more interested in comprehending the meaning of Plato's myth than its form, just as he wished to expound the invisible principles of the universe rather than arrange its visible phenomena. But this does not signal a disregard for the mythical form. On the contrary, it seems the form of the *Timaeus* as myth became even more important for William. Not only did it give him access to its message or content, but it also added a deeper meaning to this message.

The importance of myth for William can be demonstrated best when we look at his choice of genre in expounding the *Timaeus*. William makes a sharp distinction between commenting on a text and glossing it. Whereas a commentary concerns itself solely with collecting the true meanings of the text (*in unum colligere*), the aim of glossing a text is to focus on the letter or continuation of the text (*continuatio litterae*) alongside its meaning in a clear attempt not to separate them. To put it differently, in a gloss one must

³⁵ See *Glosae super Platonem* ch. 37, ed. Jeauneau, pp. 104-05. For William *natura operans* (*est natura vis rebus insita similia de similibus operans*) comes to form a middle level between the *opus creatoris* (by which he refers to the creation of elements as well as divine miracles such as the virgin birth) and the *opus artificis* (human deeds propelled by indigence or need, i.e., building a house against the cold). Cf. also *Glosae* ch. 44, ed. Jeauneau, p. 112: *Magnus actor est homo, maior natura, maximus creator*. What is distinctive about *natura operans* is that, unlike God, it is not marked by eternity, but neither are its workings as volatile as human acts.

³⁶ One of the best treatments of William's literary techniques can be found in Dronke (1974) 13-78. In his analysis Dronke concentrates on an unpublished manuscript of William's commentary on Macrobius, which Jeauneau has characterised as one of his youthful works.

expound the text in such a way, as if the tongue of the doctor himself were uttering the words.³⁷ Still, despite his love and respect for the outward form of Plato's text, William is naturally faced with the difficulty that Plato is ultimately an author from outside the Christian orbit.³⁸ Hence his recourse to an interpretive device which can bridge the discrepancy between the pagan fables seen as wrappings or *integumenta* and their underlying meaning as the intended truth of Christianity.³⁹ Whereas the usage of such a device hints at the practice of allegory, inasmuch as the letter of the text is distinguished from its spirit, the importance of *integumentum* for William seems to far outweigh its practical function as a necessary medium between pagan form and Christian meaning. Instead of locking the interpreter into a formal contrast between appearance and reality or semblance and truth, the application of *integumentum* allows William to fulfil his task of glossator in a more appropriate fashion. In expounding Plato's meaning William consciously refrains from putting words into his mouth. Instead, he lets Plato speak for himself. The effect of William's application of *integumentum* is heightened even more when we realise that, according to William, Plato himself spoke in *integumenta*.⁴⁰ Thus by unravelling these as any competent expositor should, he not only builds on his master's tradition but effectively continues it, just as he might encourage his students to do after him.

William's use of *integumentum* is thus more than the clever invoking of a rhetorical strategy to make a pagan philosopher conform to his Christian goals, as it touches the heart of Plato's philosophy directly. This helps us to make sense of another remarkable aspect of William's recourse to Plato, namely the contradiction that appears to exist between, on the one hand, his insistence on rhetorical economy in explaining the myth of the *Timaeus* and, on the other, his surprising display of exegetical tolerance and doctrinal flexibility in the same interpretive process. At times we might find William severely criticizing those who prefer the *ornatus verborum*, the pretty ar-

³⁷ See *Glosae super Platonem* ch. 10, ed. Jeauneau, p. 67: *Commentum enim, solam sententiam exequens, de continuatione vel expositione litere nichil agit. Glosa vero omnia illa exequitur. Unde dicitur glosa id est lingua. Ita enim aperte debet exponere ac si lingua doctoris videatur docere.*

³⁸ William is aware of the discrepancies that separate the words of Plato from scriptural truth, but may on occasion be seen to turn this disadvantage to the philosopher's favour. Thus he can exclaim: *Sed quid mirum si achademicus (i.e., Plato) alicubi achademicice loquatur? Si enim ubique bene diceret, achademicus non esset.* See *Glosae super Platonem* ch. 119, ed. Jeauneau, pp. 210-11.

³⁹ On the notion of *integumentum*, see Jeauneau (1957) and Wetherbee (1972) 36-48 and Otten (1992) 342-3. See especially the insightful discussion of *integumentum* and related metaphorical terms (*involucrum*, *translatio*, *imago*, *similitudo*) in William of Conches and Abelard in Dronke (1974) 13-67.

⁴⁰ See the continuation of *Glosae super Platonem* ch. 119, Jeauneau p. 211: *Si quis tamen non verba tantum sed sensum Platonis cognoscat, non tantum non inveniet heresim sed profundissimam philosophiam integumentis verborum tectam. Quod nos, Platonem diligentes, ostendamus.*

rangement of words, to the *ornatus creaturarum*, the divine arrangement of created things.⁴¹ Still, we should again resist the temptation to translate his harsh words into disrespect for the form of Platonic myth itself. It seems William launches this criticism ultimately for a deeper reason, namely to underscore the need for close conformity and continuity between God's ordered arrangement of creation and the words selected to describe it.⁴² William's exegetical flexibility, on the other hand, speaks to a rather different point. It signals that the use of *integumentum* as an interpretive device is ultimately conditioned by the author's interest in constructing his own myth. As said, according to William Plato himself spoke in *integumenta*.⁴³ If we want to hear the full harmony of Plato's philosophy, therefore, we cannot afford to overlook any of his metaphors by narrowing the interpretive range of the *Timaeus* to a literal interpretation of its myth.

Through his deliberate show of exegetical tolerance, William reveals how for him the concept of *integumentum* possesses an inherent polyvalence. All coherent readings are admissible as long as they fulfil one essential condition, i.e., that they not contradict one another.⁴⁴ By imposing a forced closure on the chain of associations set in motion through the evocative power of myth, such contradictory interpretations would prematurely silence the voice of their original author, the venerated Plato himself.

⁴¹ A case in point is the Prologue to Book II of the *Philosophia*, where he contrasts his goal to explain the *ornatus elementorum* with his eagerness to avoid *ornatus verborum* so as to accurately display the truth. See *Philosophia* II Prologus, ed. Maurach, p. 41. In *Glosae super Platonem* ch. 71, ed. Jeaneau, p. 144, William describes the *ornatus mundi* as: quicquid in singulis videtur elementis ut stelle in celo, aves in aere, pisces in aqua, homines in terra, etc.

⁴² This problem derives from an even larger problem, namely that creation is ultimately the product of a divine author, who can only be known in the next life and who in this life cannot be described with proper dignity. Cf. *Glosae super Platonem* ch. 42, ed. Jeaneau, pp. 110-11: Omnes enim sermones ad loquendum de creaturis inventi sunt sed postea, cognito Creatore, propter quandam similitudinem ad loquendum de Deo sunt translati ut hoc nomen: pater, filius, et hec verba: genuit, creavit, fecit, voluit. See also n. 54 below.

⁴³ William repeatedly refers to Plato's use of *integumenta*, e.g. in *Glosae super Platonem* ch. 74, ed. Jeaneau, p. 150: *Deinde subiungit qualiter, more suo per integumenta loquens*. Cf. also *Glosae*, chs. 80 and 113.

⁴⁴ William frequently harmonises different authoritative texts by interpreting their statements on different levels. Thus he distinguishes between what is said *fabulose*, *astrologice* or *astronomic*, as in *Philosophia* II, III, ed. Maurach, p. 44. While accepting the simultaneous existence of different levels of interpretation, however, he requires consistency on each level. This is why he makes a substantial distinction in *Glosae super Platonem*, ch. 172 between understanding (*intellectus*) which builds on certainty, and meaning (*opinio*) which he sees as *traducibilis*. As he explains: Traducibile est quod ad contraria uno eodemque tempore potest traduci, ut opinio: modo enim unum opinamur, modo contrarium. Sed intellectus non est traducibilis, quia ex quo aliquid intellectu percipimus, quia certa ratio semper sequitur intellectum, nunquam ad contrarium traducimur. (ed. Jeaneau, pp. 283-84).

3. William's cosmological synthesis ⁴⁵

The third part of this essay is devoted to how William manages to bring the different strands of his arguments, his cosmological interests and his adherence to a rational division of the universe combined with his literary and rhetorical sensitivities, together to form a lasting synthesis. To this aim I want to briefly focus on his last known work, the *Dragmaticon Philosophiae*. While clearly Platonic in structure, as in it William engages in a dialogue or *dramatic* interchange with his employer and worldly Lord, Geoffrey Plantagenet—hence the title *Dragmaticon*—, this work contains what is also the most sustained and detailed exposition of his natural philosophy. In the *Dragmaticon* William no longer feels the need to lash out at his opponents, as he did in the earlier *Philosophia*. Thus he silently leaves out any references to the World Soul. On the other hand, he is now ready to openly retract his metaphorical interpretation of Eve's creation from Adam's rib, which had so irked William of St. Thierry and may also have scandalised others among his religious contemporaries. He thus appears quite eager to avoid being branded a heretic, a motive which may well have prompted his famous statement: "Not the words make a heretic, but their defense."⁴⁶ Yet William's conciliatory tone of voice at the opening of the *Dragmaticon* should not induce us to think that his Platonic allegiance has in any way been diminished. In fact, his choice to structure his work as a dialogue may well point to the contrary. Instead of seeing it as a compromise, I think his move is better explained when we regard it as a thinly veiled attempt to protect Plato's reputation as a serious philosopher, on which William had after all built his own. As William stated in *Philosophia* I 22, philosophers state only what is necessary. Given that even Plato himself saw the World Soul as an *integumentum*, the analogy between the World Soul and the Holy Spirit is obviously not essential for him. So it can safely be eliminated.⁴⁷

At the same time, however, we also see William entering a new path in the *Dragmaticon*. This will eventually lead him beyond the Chartrian practise of *lectio philosophorum*, while in the eyes of some scholars it also makes him a more successful physicist.⁴⁸ Whereas philosophers state what is

⁴⁵ Careful overviews of William's cosmology are given by Gregory (1955) 175-246 and Elford (1988).

⁴⁶ See *Dragmaticon* I.1.8, ed. Ronca, p. 7: uerba enim non faciunt haereticum, sed defensio. A few lines earlier William compared his *Dragmaticon* to his earlier *Philosophia* as follows: Est igitur nostrum consilium, quae in eo uera sunt, hic apponere, falsa dampnare, praetermissa supplere.

⁴⁷ On William's view of the World Soul as an *integumentum*, see Jeaneau (1963) 158-172.

⁴⁸ As revealed by Elford, William substantially develops and refines his theory of the elements in his *Dragmaticon* perhaps influenced by the implicit criticism of Herrman of Carinthia's *De essentiis* (ca. 1143). See Elford (1988) 311-316 and *Dragmaticon* I.6.1-13, ed. Ronca, pp. 21-28.

necessary, physicists focus on what is probable.⁴⁹ It is in the realm of probable knowledge that William's chief interest will henceforth lie. This is borne out by the scope of the *Dragmaticon*, which sets out to explore the vast realms of macro- and microcosm on a much more comprehensive and more systematic scale than the *Philosophia*. It devotes attention to such widely separate topics as the movement of the planets, the emergence of thunder and lightning and, increasingly also, the mechanics of the human body.⁵⁰

At the end of this article I want to summarise William's accomplishment by way of a short conclusion. For this purpose I should like to return briefly to the virulent criticism of William of St. Thierry. While it is easy to dismiss his criticism of his Norman namesake as besides the point, especially since his letter to Bernard of Clairvaux makes clear that he failed to take notice of the most threatening implications of his scientific worldview,⁵¹ it seems that underneath this controversy Christian thought found itself at a crossroad. While in the late eleventh century Anselm of Canterbury could still join faith and understanding almost seamlessly, it seems that in the twelfth century the former spontaneity of this alliance became overly strained, and an ever widening gap began to separate the realm of rational understanding from that of faith. As the case of William of St. Thierry makes clear, "faith" would become increasingly associated with the fundamental certainty of things unseen,⁵² which were seen as pertaining exclusively to the corporeal

⁴⁹ See *Philosophia* I, VII §19, ed. Maurach, p. 26: ... ut philosophi enim necessarium, etsi non probabile ponimus, ut physici vero probabile, etsi non necessarium adiungimus. William of St. Thierry appears to confuse these two levels of speech in his accusation that William *physice de Deo philosophatur*. See Leclercq (1969) 389 line 248. The discussion of the elements in the *Dragmaticon* (see above n. 48) starts with a reference to *verisimiles rationes*. See *Dragmaticon* I.6.1, ed. Ronca, p. 22.

⁵⁰ In *Philosophia* IV, XI §19, ed. Maurach, pp. 97-98, William suspended his medical speculation about the sexual appetite of women after giving birth and the transmission of leprosy through sexual intercourse ... *ne corda religiosorum, si forte hoc opus nostrum in manibus acceperint, diu loquendo de tali re offendamus*, yet he returns to such themes with more insistence in *Dragmaticon* VI.8.1-14, ed. Ronca, pp. 205-211. Thus it seems William's deference to his critics in his later work does not seriously alter his scientific speculations on other controversial issues. Not only does William substantially expand his speculation about the human body and human nature in *Dragmaticon* VI.7.1 - VI.7.6, ed. Ronca, pp. 203-273, but he also aligns it more closely with his explanation of the macrocosmos: the notions of *vires naturae* and of *fumus* (vapor) are important in this regard as they are adduced to explain such transitive processes as human growth, changes in the seasons, or even the dynamics of a thunderstorm.

⁵¹ William of St. Thierry's criticism is directed predominantly against William of Conches' view of the Trinity and his account of the creation of Adam and Eve. It has been widely observed that his anti-heretical campaign overlooked the radical implications of William of Conches' astronomical theories, which hold that the universe and human life are radically influenced by the stars and the movement of the planets.

⁵² William of St. Thierry criticizes Abelard's definition of faith as *estimatio* (hence: not certainty) *rerum non apparentium* on precisely this point. See Ferruolo (1985) 73. Cf. the definition of Hebr. 11:1 (Vg.): *Est autem fides sperandarum substantia rerum, argumentum non apparentium*.

life of Christ as it translated into sacramental meaning.⁵³ For other twelfth century thinkers, however, the meaning of "reason" seemed to become more and more interpreted as understanding by means of an inquiry into invisible reality. They not only wanted to broaden the Christian outlook on the universe to include dimensions previously unexplored, but they also began to develop an interest in notions of probability and scientific calculation. Against this general and somewhat schematic background of the cultural climate of the early twelfth century, it is all the more significant that in making their move towards a more rational and scientific investigation of nature, Chartrian thinkers like William of Conches decided to assign Plato and his *Timaeus* a pivotal role. For by coupling the view of Plato as the philosopher of invisible reality with the familiar view of the master of fable and myth who simultaneously soothes and stimulates the human mind, the Chartrians appear to view their own furthering of rational cosmology ultimately also more as an exercise in meaning and form by which to hone human interpretive skills than as a latching on to certitude. After all, the trademark of human speculation about the world for William is verisimilitude.⁵⁴ By the middle of the twelfth century it seemed the divergence of reason and faith, or nature and scripture was already firmly underway. Moreover, in another decade or so Plato would succumb to Aristotle in a scholastic change of authorities that would revolutionise philosophical and theological speculation. While all these changes brought about much needed progress in the human search for knowledge and truth, it seems they came at the expense of the earlier quest for a successful union of science and myth. It is the particular achievement of William of Conches that, based on a careful interpretation of Plato's *Timaeus* which is exemplified not only in his glosses but also in his more systematic works, he was able to leave us a lasting vista of what this constructive middle option might have looked like.

⁵³ William of St. Thierry rejects the metaphorical interpretation of the creation of Eve *ex costa*, because in rejecting its literal truth William of Conches denies the analogy between the birth of Eve and the birth of the Church from Christ's lateral wound on the cross. From Christ's wound on the cross flow the sacraments of the Church. See Leclercq (1969) 390 lines 298-302.

⁵⁴ Just as the certainty of the divine can only be known in the next life (see above n.42), so the human knowledge of God and the world in this life can never be more than verisimilitude. See e.g. *Glosae super Platonem* ch. 47, ed. Jeaneau, p. 115: Quandoquidem sufficiunt rationes de mundo verisimiles et non necessarie, ergo si per omnia non dicam necessaria ne mireris. Ita habemus a Platone quod de Deo nichil est dicendum nisi verum et necessarium sed de corporibus quod nobis verisimile videtur etsi aliter possit esse.

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CHAPTER EIGHT

GILBERT OF POITIERS ON THE APPLICATION OF LANGUAGE TO THE TRANSCENDENT AND SUBLUNARY DOMAINS

JOKE SPRUYT

As is well known, throughout the years readers of the work of Gilbert of Poitiers have had enormous difficulties interpreting his views. Especially his ideas on how language can be used for both creature and the Divine are hard to uncover. The major problem in this case is of course what happens to the meaning of terms when they are transported from a domain we are familiar with to the supranatural.

Fortunately a lot of work has been done to clear up the obscurities, not the least by Professor de Rijk,¹ to whom this paper is respectfully dedicated. On the other hand, we are not out of the woods yet. Among other things, Gilbert's ideas on the unity of Christ are still sources of confusion.²

My intentions in this contribution are of a modest nature only. What interests me is to see in what ways Gilbert, when speaking of divinity, distinguishes between different uses of language. In order to do so I shall look into the things he has to say about this subject in his commentaries on Boethius.³ First of all, there are manners of expression that derive their proper meaning from the world of the transcendent but can also be conveniently used for things in the created world. There is also one term at least, *viz. persona*, that has a sublunar source and is applied to God, and in fact, to the mystery of the Trinity.

The objective of this contribution, is to explore Gilbert's ideas as to how the significates of terms are influenced when transportation from one domain to the other takes place. Specific attention will be given to the concepts the theologian uses to explain the relationships between different uses of one and the same term. First I shall deal with those linguistic expressions that have their real meaning in the Transcendent Domain (sections 1.1-1.3). Next, the notion of *forma* will be looked into (section 2). Finally, the notion of *persona* as applied to the Divine Persons will be considered (section 3).

¹ See de Rijk (1987), (1988a), (1989).

² Nielsen (1982) 165-189; Colish (1987) 128-129.

³ The commentaries on Boethius edited by Häring (1966).

*1. The transcendent source of linguistic expressions:
the notions of esse, bonum and unum*

1.1 The concept of esse

As is to be expected in a Neoplatonic theory, of pivotal importance in Gilbert's semantics is the role played by the term *being*. Of course in such a metaphysics, the only thing that can be truly said to *be* is God. That is to say, all other entities have somehow derived their being from that First Cause. Thus their *being* is on a different level, and the way in which they can be said to *be* must be understood in terms of the different principles at work in them. Put otherwise, for the created things it is true to say that they 'are something' (*esse aliquid*), but for God it is not.⁴ His *being* is not restricted in any way.⁵ Put otherwise, whereas created being is always something qualified, God is not. De Rijk remarks that it is therefore unfortunate that Gilbert should say that God is *qualis* (de Rijk (1988a) 98). However, I think that this statement does not create a problem, because when he describes God, that is, when he explains how we are to understand what we say about God when we use the familiar labels, Gilbert says:

In Contra Eut. I, 23, p. 247²⁵⁻²⁸: Itaque etsi magnus est, non tamen hoc est quantitate; etsi qualis est, non tamen qualitate; etsi durat, non tamen tempore.

Although he is great, he is not thus in virtue of quantity; although he is of a certain kind, he is not thus in virtue of a quality; although he endures, he does not in virtue of temporality.

Perhaps de Rijk's translating *qualis* into 'qualitative' is the source of misunderstanding. I think the only thing that Gilbert is trying to say here is that when we say certain things about God (when we apply greatness to Him), when we consider Him to be of a certain kind (wise, good, just, and so on), no restrictions are involved at all, even though when we apply these same expressions to created entities they suggest a limitation of *being*.

That God truly *is*, whereas other things than He derive their being from that Source, has its effect on the way in which the word '*esse*' is used for the created beings, and the same goes for the label '*essentia*'. In Gilbert's words:

In De Trin. I, 2, 45, pp. 87⁶³-88⁶⁹: Essentia vero, que Principium est, omnia creata precedit: illis omnibus, ut "esse" dicantur, impertiens et a nullo alio, ut ipsa sit, sumens. ... Et cum de ea quis loquens dicit "essentia est", sic debet intelligi: Essentia est illa res QUE EST IPSUM ESSE i.e. que non ab alio hanc mutuatur dictionem ET EX QUA EST ESSE i.e. que ceteris omnibus eandem quadam extrinseca participatione communicat.

⁴ *In Contra Eut.* I, 24, p. 247²⁴: Deus est essentia, non est aliquid.

⁵ See de Rijk (1988a) 94.

Essence, which is the origin, precedes all created things: bestowing it on all things to be called '*to be*', and drawing itself his own being from nothing else. ... And when someone speaking thereof says "essence is", one should understand this as follows: Essence is that thing which is *Being* itself (that is, which does not borrow this name from anything else), and from which *being* derives (that is, which communicates essence to all other things through some extrinsic participation).

In this passage, 'the same name' is my rendering of '*eandem*', by which of course '*eandem dictionem*' is meant. In the concluding sentence there is an ambivalent use of the name to begin with, as it covers both the *esse* and the right to carry the name '*esse*'. What Gilbert means to say here is that in the expression "essence is", the term *is* is used in an absolute sense. Essence genuinely *is* and is fully entitled to carry the label of *being*, and completely lives up to the content of the name '*be*'.⁶ Not only is *essentia* entitled to carry the name *esse*, but also it passes its content, *being*, on to other entities. It is owing to this process of communication that the entities on the receiving end are also entitled to the name 'being'. But they cannot take credit for that label themselves: instead the communication of *being* by essence allows those entities to carry the name of 'being' by extrinsic participation. Later on we shall come across the expression 'extrinsic denomination'⁷ as the means to explain how the two kinds of *esse* are connected. What is already clear now is that *being* does not befall creatures through any merits of their own. Instead they *are* owing to some 'property' coming to them from outside.

Considering the nature of the relationship between creatures and their origin, it is not difficult to infer that somehow the term '*esse*' undergoes a change when it is used for other things than the transcendent Essence. In fact this becomes clear in Gilbert's next words:

In De Trin. I, 2, 46, p. 88⁷⁰⁻⁷⁵: Non enim de quolibet sue essentie proprietate dicitur "est". Sed ab Eo qui non aliena sed sua essentia proprie *est*, ad illud quod creata ab ipso forma *aliquid est* et ad ipsam creatam formam et denique ad omnia que de ipsis vere dicuntur ... dictio ista transsumitur ut de unoquoque divine Forme participatione recte dicatur "est".

⁶ The idea expressed in this passage is clearly Platonic. In Plato's works *onoma* is always a significative word, or more precisely, the term '*onoma*' is always used with reference to its significate. For a detailed account of Plato's semantics, see de Rijk (1986); particularly chapter 13.

⁷ The semantic term *denominatio extrinseca* refers to the naming of something on account of some property (either essential or accidental) that is not found in the thing thus named. A well-known example is '*visum*'. When something is called 'the seen', it is not because seeing is part of the thing's constitution, but it is only so named on account of something outside that thing, in this case the entity engaged in the act of seeing, of which act that thing is merely an incidental object. The counterpart of *denominatio extrinseca* is of course the *denominatio intrinseca*, which occurs when something is named after some property found within it, e.g. *album* so named after its immanent *albedo*.

For it is not of anything whatsoever that “is” is said in virtue of the property of essence. But from Him, who *is*, not by some borrowed essence but His own, to that which owing to a form created by Him *is something* as well as to that created form and, in short, to all things that are truly said of them ... this name is transferred so that of each one of them thanks to their partaking of the divine Form truly is said “is”.

Hence the *formatum*, i.e. what is formed, and the *forma informans*, and whatever is said of those things created by God are said to *be*, but only insofar as their being is bestowed upon them by the Divine Essence. The term ‘being’ then has its original significative source in God, and whatever comes from Him can also be said to *be*, but in a modified way, and, as has been said earlier, by extrinsic denomination only.

Once we come down to the created world, the *being* of the entities in it becomes qualified. For one thing, unlike Transcendent Being, created bodies *are* in a limited sense only. But that is not all. As soon as *Being* (which is incomplex) is participated in, its simplicity is over and done with. The diversity is expressed in different ways: on the level of the natural world there is the well-known Boethian distinction between ‘the being’ (‘that which is’ = *id quod est*) and that owing to which it is (*id quo est*). This distinction of course does not apply to God:

In De Trin. I, 2, 54, pp. 89²⁴-90²⁷: ATQUE IDEO vere est UNUM ET adeo simplex in se ... ut recte de hoc uno dicatur quod de ipso principio, cuius usia est, dicitur scilicet: EST ID QUOD EST.

And so He is truly one and simple in Himself to such an extent ... that correctly of this thing alone is said what is said of its principle, of which it is the *usia*, namely: He is what *is*.⁸

In the same manner as we can say of God “God is”, we can also say “God is Essence Itself”. Contrary to the created world, in which the things are complex, in God’s being there is not a going together of diverse things. Hence we can say of Him that “God is Divinity Itself” or “God is Wisdom Itself”, things one cannot say of the entities of this world (*In De Trin.* I, 2, 55, p. 90²⁸⁻³⁶).

That the notion of *esse* first and foremost derives its meaning from its transcendent origin is explicitly stated in *In De hebdomadibus* I, in the commentary upon of the second axiom:

In De heb. I, 27, p. 193⁵⁴⁻⁵⁷: Nam in theologica, divina essentia—quam de Deo predicamus cum dicimus “Deus est”—omnium creatorum dicitur esse. Cum enim dicimus “corpus est” vel “homo est” vel huiusmodi, theologici hoc

⁸ Usually people take *quod* in the phrase *id quod est* as predicate nominal (‘that which it is’). De Rijk has argued that to do so is a mistake (de Rijk (1988a) 75). In our case such a rendering would not make any sense at all. To say that God is what he is is no different from saying that a tree is what it is and that I am what I am. What is meant of course is that He is what <really, in an unqualified sense> *is* (*est id quod est*), whereas all other things (natural beings) are what *is something* (*id quod est aliquid*).

esse dictum intelligunt quadam extrinseca denominatione ab essentia sui Principii.

For in the theological discipline, the Divine Essence—which we predicate of God when we say “God is”—is called the being of all creatures. For when we say “a body is” or “a man is”, or some such thing, theologians understand this to be said by some extrinsic denomination after the essence of their Origin.

We see that here the expression *denominatio extrinseca* is used with regard to the way in which natural beings are entitled to carry the name ‘being’. So the *being* of the Creator is definitely not the same as the *being* of the things. It is the Creator of. At best the expression ‘is’ in these two different cases is used in a paronymous way only. In that same connection it is once again brought to our attention that according to the theologians, the *being* of creatures is always tantamount to ‘being a something’ (*In De hebd.* I, 28, p. 193⁵⁹⁻⁶⁰).

Besides looking at things from the theological point of view, according to which *esse* belongs to the transcendent domain, Gilbert recognises that philosophers also speak of *esse* with regard to the natural world. Two kinds of philosophical perspectives are mentioned in this connection. The first group asserts that

In De hebd. I, 29, p. 193⁶⁷⁻⁷⁰: quelibet illa orationum suarum themata, i.e. materias de quibus loquuntur, eodem quo dicunt *esse*, dicunt etiam *esse aliquid*. Unde etiam hoc verbum “est” dicunt de omnibus equivoce predicari.

of whatever objects of their statements (that is, the matters of which they speak) they say that by the same cause as they *are*, they *are a something*. Therefore they say that the verb “is” is said of all things equivocally.

From the perspective of the second group of philosophers he brings up, the distinction between *esse* and *esse aliquid* reflects the differences between the first Aristotelian category (‘substance’ or subsistent mode of being) and the categories of quality and quantity. Along these lines a division is made into the cause of a thing’s *being* and the cause of its *being a something*:

In De hebd. I, 30, p. 194⁷¹⁻⁷³: Alii vero dividunt, et ea que subsistunt dicunt *esse* subsistentiis et *esse aliquid* his que subsistentias concomitantur, intervalibus scilicet mensuris et qualitatibus.

Others, on the other hand, make a distinction, saying that the entities that subsist *are* owing to <their> subsistentiae and *are a something* owing to the things that accompany the latter, namely <their> spatial dimensions and <their> qualities.

Thus to the first three categories, *esse* can be applied, split up into *esse* (substance) and *esse aliquid* (quality/quantity). As to the remaining seven categories:

In De hebd. I, 30-31, p. 194⁷⁴⁻⁷⁵: Ceteris vero septem generum praedicamentis eadem subsistentia nec *esse* nec *aliquid esse* concedunt.

Of the other seven generic categories they assert that owing to them the afore-said subsistent things neither *are* nor *are* a something.

Our findings regarding the origins and uses of the term *esse* can be summarised as follows. *Esse* first and foremost pertains to the essence of God; in a derived sense it applies to the beings that owe their existence to Him. In the domain of the natural world we no longer come across *esse* in its pure sense, but instead encounter it in a compound way: *esse* has now become *esse aliquid*. While he mentions the philosophers who consider '*est*' to be equivocal (the Aristotelian view, for that matter), Gilbert does not really say whether he would describe it in that way himself. But there is no doubt that he would go along with the theologians, who talk about a *denominatio extrinseca*, which means, as we have seen, that the things other than the Divine Essence are called 'being' owing to the Being of their Creator, but not through any merits of their own. At the same time our author recognises that in the domain of the natural things, too, a distinction can be made between *esse* and *esse aliquid*.

In the previous discussion about *esse* we have already come across the notion of participation. This notion also plays a major role in *De hebdomadibus*, in which two axioms are of importance, *viz.* the third and sixth axiom. The third states that

In De hebd. I, p. 195⁹⁻¹²: "Quod est, participare aliquo potest. Sed ipsum esse nullo modo aliquo participat. Fit enim participatio cum aliquid iam est. Est autem aliquid cum esse suscepit."

"That which is can participate in something <else>. But being, when taken by itself, can in no way participate in something else. For participation occurs when something already is; and something is when it has received being."

In order to understand what Gilbert's position is on the connection between Goodness and good things, we must see what he has to say about *participatio*.

In his exposé on the axiom mentioned above, Gilbert relates to us the distinction between the modes of being pertaining to substance and accidents (in the Aristotelian sense):

In De hebd. I, 38, p. 195¹³⁻¹⁹: ID QUOD EST, hoc est subsistens, quod ea quam in se habet subsistentia est, POTEST PARTICIPARE ALIQUO, i.e. cum ipsa subsistentia aliquid aliud, quod ad potentiam subsistentie illius pertineat, in se potest habere: ut corpus, quod corporalitate quam in se habet est, cum ea colorem et lineam et diversorum generum qualitates et quantitates alias ad corporalitatis potentiam pertinentes, quibus ipsum quale et quantum est, in se habet.

What is (that is to say, the subsistent thing which, owing to the *subsistentia* in it, *is*) can partake in something else (that is, it can have in it together with its *subsistentia* some other thing) which pertains to the potency of this *subsistentia*; e.g. a body, which owing to the corporeity it has in it *is*, has in it together with that corporeity colour too and delineation, as well as other qualities and

quantities (of several kinds pertaining to the potency of corporeity, owing to which this thing is a *quale* and a *quantum*).

Thus in this passage a broad sense of 'having' is spoken of, which is divided into having in a substantial way (or rather, the mode of *subsistentia*) and having in the way of an additional participation. The latter coincides with a thing's possession of accidents (the privileged ones, viz. those falling under the categories of quality and quantity)⁹, and at the same time connects the occurrence of those kinds of accidents with the type of *subsistentia* involved.

While this third axiom seems to confine the notion of *participatio* to a thing's possession of accidents, this is not the case, as our author points out further along in his commentary. First of all he explains that what Boethius wishes to say¹⁰ is that participation can only occur for things that *are*:

In De hebd. I, 39, p. 195²¹⁻²²: quod in se non habet *esse* quo sit, nullo modo cum *esse* potest habere in se quo quale vel quantum sit.

what does not have being in it owing to which it *is*, in no way can have together with *being* something <else> owing to which it is a *quale* or a *quantum*.

In his remarks on the fourth axiom it becomes even more clear that our author interprets Boethius as bringing forward a distinction into two kinds of participation.¹¹ This is explained in connection with the sixth axiom of *De hebdomadibus*:

In De hebd. I, p. 198⁹²: "Omne quod est participat eo quod est esse ut sit. Alio uero participat ut aliquid sit."

"Everything that is participates in being in order to be. And it participates in something else in order to be a something."¹²

Gilbert first explains how the kind of participation mentioned earlier and the one in this axiom come together. In the third axiom, he says, the kind of participation apart from its *esse* was referred to:

In De hebd. I, 53, pp. 198⁹⁷-199³: dicebat id quod est cum suo esse aliud habere quiddam. Unde in quarta aperte dicebat: "Id quod est, habere aliquid preterquam quod ipsum est potest". In quo etiam—et in eo quod in tertie clausula ponebat dicens: "*Est* autem aliquid cum *esse* suscepit", et in fine secunde

⁹ I.e. the modes of being that pertain to the thing's *esse aliquid*, see above p. 209. As is explained by de Rijk (1988a) 101-106, Gilbert quite consistently separates the second and third categories from the seven others. The mode of being of these two privileged accidents is described by him (*In De Trin.* I, 4, 18) as *adesse*, as distinguished from *inesse*, which is the mode of being proper of the category of substance. The seven remaining ones are labelled as *extrinsecus affixa*.

¹⁰ This in fact has been pointed out by de Rijk (1988b) 19.

¹¹ Cf. de Rijk (1988b) 25.

¹² As has been remarked by de Rijk, the correct reading of the formula is probably "Omne quod participat eo quod est esse ut sit, aliquo participat ut aliquid sit." Gilbert takes the usual mediaeval reading, with 'est' after 'participat'. See de Rijk (1988b) 20; (1989) 16.

subiungens “quod est, accepta essendi forma, est”—patenter ostendit quoniam habere *ipsum esse* participatio est.

he called it ‘to have something else together with its being’. So in the fourth rule he clearly stated “that which is can have something besides what it is itself.” By that—and also by what was stated at the end of the third rule, saying “it is a something when it has acquired *being*” and by adding at the end of the second rule “what is *is* as soon as it has received the form *being*”—he patently showed that to have *being itself* is participation.

In the sixth axiom, our author continues, it is not only a thing’s having something by which it is a something that is covered by the notion of participation, but also its having *being* by which it *is* (*In De hebd.* I, 55, p. 199⁷⁻¹⁰). These two modes of participation are of a different order, however: the partaking in *being* is naturally prior to its sharing in something else (*In De hebd.* I, 56, p. 199¹¹⁻¹²).

Before looking into what Gilbert has to say about similitude and diversity, a remark should be made about the fifth axiom, which runs:

In De hebd. I, p. 197⁴⁹⁻⁵⁰: “Diversum est ‘tantum esse aliquid’ et ‘esse aliquid in eo quod est’. Illic enim accidens, hic substantia significatur.”

“‘Just to be something’ and ‘to be something in virtue of its being’ is something different. For in the former accident, and in the later substance is signified.”

This distinction is crucial for both Boethius’s and Gilbert’s solution to the problem of how things in the created world relate to transcendent Goodness. Before he explains it further, Gilbert first reminds us again of the philosophers who distinguish between *being* (*esse*) and *being something* (*esse aliquid*) in the sense that the use of the former is confined to *subsistentiae* alone, whereas the latter expression applies to the things that are different from those, namely the accidents. (*In De hebd.* I, 45, p. 197⁵¹⁻⁵⁴) Then he proceeds:

In De hebd. I, 46, p. 197⁵⁵⁻⁵⁸: Dicimus etiam quoniam id quod est aliquid quandoque dicitur “esse aliquid in eo quod est”—et hoc quoque duobus modis—quandoque vero ita simpliciter “esse aliquid” quod nullo modo in eo quod est.

We also say that that which is something is sometimes said ‘to be something in virtue of its *being*’—and this again in two ways—but sometimes thus simply ‘to be something’ that it in no way <is said> in virtue of its *being*.

In the next paragraph examples are given:

In De hebd. I, 60, p. 197⁵⁹⁻⁶¹: Verbi gratia, aliquod opus et ereum dicitur et humanum et triangulum; sed ereum atque humanum “in eo quod est”—diversa tamen ratione—triangulum vero nulla ratione in eo quod est sed “tantum” triangulum.

For instance, some artefact is called bronzen¹³ and human and a triangle: bronzen and human, however, 'in virtue of its *being*'—although owing to a different aspect of *being*¹⁴—whereas a triangle in no way in virtue of its *being* but 'just' a triangle.

So far this much is clear: there are two ways in which we can talk about a thing as 'something', viz. either in virtue of its *being* or just as something. Next our author proceeds to clarify what was put *in parenthesis*, viz. the two-fold way in which the phrase 'being a something in virtue of its being' is to be understood. Taking again the example of the bronzen triangle (note that it is always a certain, concrete triangle he is talking about, one that happens to be made of bronze) he continues:

In De hebd. I, 48, p. 197⁶³⁻⁶⁸: Et ereum dicitur "esse in eo quod est" quoniam, eo ipso quo est—suo scilicet genere—dicitur ereum. Humanum vero dicitur "esse in eo quod est" non quidem quoniam sit humanum genere quo ipsum est, sed quoniam hoc quod ipsum opus esse ereum predicatur, ideo humanum est quia auctor eius vere "in eo quod est", i.e. genere proprio, humanus est ...

And it is said 'to be' bronzen in 'virtue of its *being*', because after that owing to which it is—namely after its kind—it is called bronzen. It is said 'to be' human 'in virtue of its *being*', however, not as if the genus owing to which it is itself is of the human kind, but in view of the fact that it is itself said to be a bronzen work of art, is therefore human because its maker truly in virtue of his *being*, that is by his own nature, is human ...

In sum: the triangle in question, the bronzen one, truly is something bronzen, because that is precisely what it is made of. Hence materially speaking it is essentially bronzen. But it is just as correct to say that the triangle is essentially human. For it is an artefact, and art is by definition something human.

Of course the triangle could also be seen as just a something, just a triangle. Its being a triangle, however, is not something Gilbert is focussed upon in the example he has given. Instead it is important to realise what the example alludes to. An artefact represents a trace of humanity in the same sense as creation represents a trace of God. This feature of creation will help to explain in what way Gilbert accounts for the relationship between Transcendent Goodness and the goodness of things in this world.

1.2 On the notion of bonum

Another notion that is of paramount importance to account for the relationship between the Transcendent Domain and the world of creation is found in the ninth axiom, which contains the maxim

¹³ In order to avoid any misunderstandings I have chosen the archaic form 'bronzen' (= 'made of bronze') instead of 'bronze'.

¹⁴ Instead of merely identifying *ratio* with 'concept', it is often better to translate *ratio* in such a way that reference is made to some sort of ontological structure. For the metaphysical connotations of *ratio* see de Rijk (1994).

In De hebd. I, p. 203⁹⁷⁻⁹⁸: “Omne diversitas discors. Similitudo vero appetenda est.”

“All diversity is repulsive, but similitude desirable.”

By way of introduction, the commentator explains the relationships between *diversity, identity and likeness (similitudo)*:

In De hebd. I, 70, p. 203¹⁻⁶: Diversitati identitas contraria est, similitudo vero repugnans. Idcirco quamvis quibuscumque rationibus “idem” dicitur, eisdem “diversis” quoque dicatur, tamen hoc loco in ea ratione in qua similitudo intelligitur diversitatem intelligendam docuit cum—premisso quod OMNIS DIVERSITAS DISCORS—non subiunxit: “identitas vero” sed potius “SIMILITUDO VERO etc.”.

Identity is contrary to, but likeness is repulsive of diversity. Hence even though under whatever aspects is said ‘the same’ under the same aspects is said ‘diverse’, nevertheless in this passage he taught that diversity must be understood under the aspect ‘likeness’ is understood, by the fact that—having assumed that all diversity is repulsive—he did not proceed ‘but identity ...’, but rather ‘but likeness, etc.’.

Having mentioned that the likeness spoken of here should not be taken in the sense of some relationship after a proportion¹⁵ between contraries, equal things or things falling under the same notion (*In De hebd.* I, 71), our author explains that it amounts to ‘a kind of union of diverse things’ (*unio diversorum*).¹⁶ Now the expression ‘union of diverse things’ also needs to be accounted for. First the kinds of union are summed up that are not meant in this connection, *viz.* the union of matter and form, of parts, or of a plurality of individuals, as in a people, a nation, a community or a spirit (*In De hebd.* I, 75, p. 204³⁰⁻³⁷).¹⁷ These types of union cannot explain the notion of likeness.

¹⁵ As was remarked by Nielsen, Gilbert uses the term *proportio* without clearly explaining what he means; see Nielsen (1982) 134. In any case, what he seems to mean here is roughly a certain extent to which things can be compared to each other. Maybe examples could be: contraries are alike in that they are contrary in some one respect, equals are alike in that they are an instance of one and the same quality (or quantity), and things falling under the same notion are alike in precisely that respect. Contrary to what Nielsen states (*ibid.*), it seems to me that there is no reason why in this connection *proportio* could not be used to compare things of one and the same category.

¹⁶ We shall touch upon the difference between *unio* and *unitas*, a distinction Gilbert is adamant about, later on. An analysis of Gilbert’s use of these concepts can be found in de Rijk (1989) 26-34.

¹⁷ The kinds of union meant here are dealt with in *In De hebd.* I, 75, p. 204²⁸⁻³⁶. In this section Gilbert explains how a union of different elements that are completely different in number occurs: the unions he speaks of are linked up with different conceptual approaches, that is different ways of grouping things on our part depending on our (scientific) angle: the union of matter and form is that of one subsistent thing (in physics or in a ‘rational’ approach); or a part and another part can form a union, so that they make up a whole according to some consideration, e.g. a collection of individuals can make up one people, one nation, one community, and so on.

The union Gilbert is looking for here is spelled out in the subsequent paragraph. The intended union, he says, is expressed by the notion of conformity and is called '*similitudo*'. Again this notion can be used in different ways:

In De hebd. I, 76, p. 204³⁹⁻⁴⁷: Et est vel secundum naturam vel secundum quedam extrinseca. Secundum naturam vero dupliciter: aut enim secundum propositae nature plenitudinem—et dicitur "substantialis similitudo", qualiter album albo simile est et homo homini—aut secundum propositae nature partes aliquas—et vocatur "imaginaria similitudo", qualiter humana pictura vero homini dicitur similis. Illa vero que est secundum extrinseca, dicitur "imitatio", qualiter artifex aliquis alii artificii vel homo Deo iuxta voluntatem eius aliquid faciendo dicitur similis.

This likeness is either according to nature or according to some extrinsic things. According to nature then in a twofold way: either with regard to the richness of the proposed nature—and this is called a 'substantial likeness' as for instance something white is similar to some other white thing, and a man to man—or with regard to some parts of the proposed nature—and this is called a 'likeness of image' as for instance a picture of a man is said to be like a real man. But the kind which is according to extrinsic things is called 'imitation', as for instance when he makes something in the spirit of the other, some artist is said to resemble another artist or man is said to resemble God.

In this paragraph the qualification *secundum naturam* is set off against *secundum quedam extrinseca*. As we saw in the preceding paragraph (1.1), the adjective *extrinseca* in the expression *denominatio extrinseca* was to be taken with reference to something that is not part of the nature of the thing in question. Thus in the theological account of the relationship between the Divine Essence and the world of created things, it was stated that a created entity can carry the label of *being* owing to the relationship it has to the Divinity, the only one that truly *is* Being; in other words, the term is used with reference to something 'outside' the entity in question. In the paragraph on *similitudo* just quoted, the use of *extrinseca* again indicates that it is on account of certain external features that we are allowed to say that two things are alike, that is to say, not on account of something that is part of the nature of the thing in question (or intrinsic, so to speak), as for example man is like God or an artist (*viz.* in his way of creating things) may resemble another artist.¹⁸

To return now to the two concepts introduced in the third and ninth axioms, i.e. participation and likeness, these appear to be the key notions that feature in the problem posed by Boethius whether the things that are good or not (*ea que sunt an bona sint an non*) (*In De hebd.* II, 84, p. 206⁹¹⁻⁹²). Gilbert's discussion of this problem, as is Boethius's, is elaborate. Not surprisingly, we might add. On the one hand goodness is not just some accident

¹⁸ For different uses of the term *extrinseca* in connection with *participatio*, see de Rijk (1989) 19, n. 18.

in the same league as whiteness, but the goods of the world cannot be identified with Absolute Goodness either.

What has to be done now is to figure out in what way things can be called good. Gilbert follows Boethius:

In De hebd. II, 87, pp. 206⁷-207¹¹: Dico quod EA QUE SUNT , i.e. que subsistunt ... BONA SUNT. Certum est ENIM, et hoc TENET COMMUNIS SENTENTIA non quidem omnium hominum sed omnium DOCTORUM: videlicet OMNE QUOD EST AD primum summumque BONUM TENDERE.

I say that the things that are, i.e. that subsistent things ... are good. For it is certain, and this is what common opinion, perhaps not of all men but of all scholars holds, namely that everything that *is* tends towards the Primary and Supreme Good.

As far as the natural things other than man are concerned, they are all, in whatever way they can—that is, in whatever way their Supreme Creator enables them to—inclined towards the Supreme Good, which genuinely and properly *is* and *is one* (*In De hebd.* I, 2, 88, p. 207¹²⁻¹⁸). As to human beings, Gilbert says,

In De hebd. II, 89, p. 207¹⁹⁻²²: Rationalis vero creatura non modo sicut cetera naturaliter verum etiam officio facit cum non tantum esse vel esse unum cupit sed etiam suum Principium vite moribus colit et mentis intelligentia recolit et toto caritatis nisu, ut sibi detur in premium, petit.

The rational creature not only acts just as the other things do, naturally, but from duty by the fact that he not only wishes *to be* or *to be one*, but, moreover, in his activities honours his Origin with his way of life and contemplates it with the intelligence of his mind and strives for it, putting into it his whole charity in order that this reunion may be given to him in reward.

The foregoing remarks account for the way in which all things are inclined toward the Supreme Good. In the subsequent passage Gilbert looks again at the claim *omne tendit ad sibi simile*. He repeats once more that the kind of similitude spoken of in this connection is not to be taken as a relationship of proportion, but a union of diverse things. Thus he explains,

In De hebd. II, 91, p. 207³¹⁻³²: OMNE quod est, i.e. omne subsistens, TENDIT AD id quod sibi unione quadam SIMILE est.

Everything that *is*, that is every subsistent thing, tends towards that which by some union is like it.

The latter is also common doctrine for philosophers and theologians, he says. Again, from this maxim and from the theological assumption that every being tends towards the good, one is entitled to infer that every being is like the good (*In De hebd.* II, 92, p. 207³⁵⁻³⁷).

The question *De hebdomadibus* deals with next (*In De hebd.* II, 95, p. 208⁵⁴⁻⁵⁶) is a crucial one: when we say “the things that are, are good”, in

what way do we mean that they are good, by participation or in substance? Gilbert tells us what Boethius means by 'substantia' in this connection:

In De hebd. I, 96, p. 208⁵⁷⁻⁵⁹: Hic 'substantiam' vult intelligi non id quod est sed ipsum esse, i.e. non subsistens sed ipsam subsistentiam, quam subsistens in se habendo—quod est ea participando—subsistit.

Here he wishes to understand by 'substance' not that which is, but *being* as such, that is to say not the subsistent thing, but the *subsistentia* itself, by the possession of which—that is, by participating in it—a thing is subsistent.

The theologian now brings up a difficulty. By using the expression "whether by participation or in substance" (when it comes to establishing the goodness of things down here), it looks as if a subsistent thing does not have *subsistentia* by participation (*In De hebd.* II, 97). He then reminds us of the fact that 'participation' was said in different ways by the author. First of all he distinguished participation in the primary nature and the secondary nature. The primary nature is said to be participated in by a subsistent thing, and it has no other cause than the Primordial One, i.e. God. This primary nature is also labelled the *generalissima subsistentia*. (*In De hebd.* II, 98, pp. 208⁶⁵-209⁷⁰) Next he explains what the secondary nature is, a kind of 'companion' (*comes*) to the primary one; it is dependent on both the Primordial Cause and the primary nature as its cause, without which it cannot be. And this secondary nature is connected with the potencies of the primary nature. (*In De hebd.* II, 99, p. 209 71-73) The primary nature and the secondary one, then, are to be associated with the thing's *subsistentiae* and accidents, respectively.¹⁹

That it must have been the second mode of participation Boethius was referring to when discussing the goodness of created things, is inferred by Gilbert judging from the conclusion the former had drawn from the assumption that these things are good by participation:

In De hebd. II, 107, p. 211²⁵⁻²⁸: Dixit quod ea que sunt si participatione bona sunt, per se ipsa bona non sunt. Et si per se ipsa bona non sunt, non tendunt ad bonum. Nunc assumit oppositum ultimi consequentis et ait: SED tendunt ad bonum.

He said that if the things that are are good by way of participation, then they are not good in themselves; and again, if they are not good in themselves, they do not tend towards the good. Now he assumes the opposite of the final consequence, and says: but they do intend towards the good.

If it is not by participation, then the only option left here would be that things are good essentially (*substantia*), because there is no way in between, Gilbert continues,

¹⁹ For the complete quotation and translation of the passages involved, see de Rijk (1989) 17-18.

In De hebd. I, 2, 110, p. 211³⁹⁻⁴¹: Quicquid enim naturaliter de ipso dicitur, aut ut eius esse predicatur aut ea que dicta est participatione.

For whatever is said of that [i.e. a subsistent thing] naturally, is said of it either as its being, or in virtue of the participation mentioned above.

But in that case we are faced with the inevitable conclusion that if goodness is not said of things in virtue of participation, it must be said of them as *being*.

As Gilbert will show, to claim that things are essentially good is not an option either. In his demonstration he tells us what this would mean. First of all, if we were to claim that things are essentially good, it would be correct to say that

In De hebd. I, 2, 112, p. 212⁴⁸⁻⁵¹: BONUM, i.e. bonitas ipsa qua dicuntur bona, EST ESSE IPSORUM. Manifestum est igitur quod BONUM EST IPSUM ESSE OMNIUM RERUM, i.e. quod bonitas omnium de quibus predicatur est esse.

the Good, that is goodness itself owing to which they are called good, is the being of those things. It is obvious therefore that good is the being itself of all things, that is, that the goodness of all things of which it is said is their being.

But given that Goodness, he continues, is their being, in that case the things that are are good in such a way that we say not just 'they are good', but 'they are good in virtue of their *being*' (*bona sunt in eo quod sunt*; *In De hebd.* I, 2, 113, p. 212⁵³⁻⁵⁵).

As to the formula '*in eo quod sunt*', Gilbert explains that there are a number of ways in which to understand it, i.e. either in the sense that it is the being of the thing of which it is said (e.g. when an artefact is called bronzen *in eo quod est*), or in the sense that it is the *being* of him owing to whom as its author both its being is that it is something and that by²⁰ which it is something (e.g. when a work is called human *in eo quod est*; *In De hebd.* I, 2, 114, p. 212⁵⁸⁻⁶³). It is in the first sense of saying *in eo quod est* that we are entitled to identify the being with the being-something, for instance if we say 'the work is bronzen *in eo quod est*' we can also say 'of the product the being is the same as being bronzen'²¹ (*In De hebd.* I, 2, 115, p. 212⁶⁴⁻⁴⁹). It is the second type of *in eo quod est* that is of interest in connection with the question regarding goodness.

Having explained the issue at this point, the theologian goes on to say that if things are good essentially, this would imply that their goodness would be their essence, and as such they would be good in the same way as the Supreme Good is good. And for that reason they would be the Supreme Good, on the assumption that the only thing that is substantially like the

²⁰ Reading with A (Paris, Arsenal 1117B): *ipsum quo est*.

²¹ It is interesting to note here that Gilbert sees a difference between the expression '*idem est ereum esse quod esse*', which is false, and '*idem est esse quod ereum esse*', which is true. The former implies that that owing to which the thing is bronzen is its total being, which is evidently not the case, whereas the latter does not. (*In De hebd.* I, 2, 115.)

Supreme Good is the Supreme Good itself. (*In De hebd.* I, 2, 120, p. 213⁹⁵-⁶⁰) Again, from this it could be inferred that all entities are identical to God:

In De hebd. I, 2, 124, p. 214¹⁵⁻²⁰: Non enim dubium est quin, si sint illud primum bonum, sint unum simplex ... Unde certum est quoniam ei quod est primum bonum—quod simplex esse ab omnibus conceditur—idem est esse quod bonum esse: et ita idem Deo esse quod bonum.

For there is no doubt that, if they were that Supreme Good, they would be a non-complex one. ... Thus it is certain that for that which is the Supreme Good, whose non-complex being is agreed upon by all, the being is the same as being good: and so for God His being is the same as good.

As far as the things other than the Supreme Good are concerned, however, that is for the composite things, we must say that their being is other than the things themselves. Hence we cannot say that good things are substantially good. (*In De hebd.* I, 2, 125, p. 214²¹⁻²³)

It is much further along that it is finally explained how, if not by participation or substantially, things can be called good. Gilbert takes us back to the words of Boethius, who had said that the being of the things that are has descended from the Good Will, and therefore they are called good. In our Master's words,

In De hebd. I, 2, 150, p. 220⁶¹⁻⁶⁴: denominative BONA ESSE DICUNTUR, sicut opus quod ereum est suo genere quo est, et triangulum sua qualitate qua aliquid est, est etiam denominative humanum ab esse illius quo secundum aliquam rationem auctore et ereum et triangulum est.

they are called good in a denominative way, such as an artefact which is bronzen in the kind by which it *is* and is a triangle in the quality by which it *is something*, and is also human in a denominative way after the being of him as its maker it, in a certain sense, owes its being a triangle and its being bronzen.

Some more explanation is given regarding the difference between the two kinds of predication by using the example of *humanum*. In the first place something can be called human on account of the genus it belongs to, such as a 'human animal'. Secondly something can be called human by denomination, because from him, whose being is human, something has descended, such as a human work. In the same way, Gilbert says, something can be called 'good': the primary good which is truly good since it is good *in eo quod est*, that is in its true essence, the secondary good which is also good but not in its true essence, but by some denomination, which the Greeks call metonymy (*methonomia*).²² Of course the two kinds of metonymy are not on

²² *In De hebd.* I, 2, 151, p. 220⁶⁵⁻⁷²: Sicut ENIM duobus modis dicitur 'humanum'—primum scilicet generis proprietate, ut 'animal humanum', et secundum denominatione quoniam ex eo fluxit cuius humanum est esse, ut 'opus humanum'—ita duobus modis dicitur 'bonum': PRIMUM scilicet BONUM quo EST vere BONUM QUONIAM EST bonum IN EO QUOD EST, scilicet sue essentie veritate. SECUNDUM VERO BONUM IPSUM QUOQUE BONUM EST non quidem sue essentie veritate sed quadam denominatione que Grece 'methonomia' vocatur.

the same level when one takes into consideration the type of relationship that exists between God and creatures as opposed to that between humans and their artefacts.²³

As was the case with regard to the term *esse*, once again the semantic label of *denominatio* is used, this time concerning the meaning of the word *bonum* when applied to created things. While for the former our theologian did not really go into details as to what kind of *denominatio* is involved, in connection with goodness his exposé of this semantic device is somewhat more elaborate. For one thing, Gilbert notes that when Boethius used the expression *ea que sunt bona sunt quero an participatione an substantia bona sunt*, it was a division into things according to their natural status he had in mind,

In De hebd. I, 2, 152, 220⁷⁵⁻⁷⁶: Quicquid enim naturaliter de subsistente dicitur, aut eius subsistentia aut eius accidens recte intelligitur.

For whatever is naturally said of a subsistent thing, is correctly understood as either its *subsistentia* or its accident.

But, he continues,

In De hebd. I, 2, 152, p. 220⁷⁶⁻⁷⁸: Preter hec tamen de ipso extra naturalium facultatem plurima dicuntur inter que illa etiam sunt que de eodem denominative predicantur.

Yet apart from these things, many things are said of that thing outside the power of natural things, among which those things are too that are said of the same thing denominatively.

So in this case to say something of an entity as far as its natural mode of being is concerned is set apart from other ways of saying things about it, of which *denominatio* is one:

In De hebd. I, 2, 153, p. 220⁷⁹⁻⁸²: Quo predicandi modo ethici omne creatum bonum esse enuntiant denominatione, vicelicet que ideo fit QUONIAM id quod ita dicitur bonum, et ut esset et ut esset aliquid, FLUXIT EX EO vere auctor et causa, CUIUS IPSUM ESSE BONUM EST, i.e. cuius ipsa bonitas essentia.

It is in this way of predicating that the *ethici* say by way of denomination that every created thing is good, namely which occurs because that which is called good in such a way both in order to *be* and to *be something*, has emanated from Him who is truly the author and the cause, Whose being as such is good, that is, Whose essence is Goodness as such.

The goodness of created things, then, has its origin in Supreme Goodness and thus the term in question is only used in a derived sense for the things down here. The operative word in this connection is *fluxit*, the verb that

²³ Cf. Jolivet (1987) 196.

indicates the process of emanation, which is used with reference to the nature of the connection between God and His creation.²⁴

Gilbert next stresses again that as far as goodness is concerned, the phrase 'in virtue of its being' (*in eo quod est*) can be added when used both with reference to the Source of all good things and the good things:

In De hebd. I, 2, 154, pp. 220⁸³-221⁸⁸: SED non modo id quod est et aliquid est itemque vel id quo est vel quo est aliquid est, verum etiam illud IPSUM ESSE OMNIUM RERUM, quod significamus cum de aliquo dicimus "est" vel "aliquid est", EX EO veri nominis auctore et opifice FLUXIT QUOD EST PRIMUM BONUM ET QUOD vere TALE BONUM EST UT illud DICATUR ita ESSE BONUM quod RECTE possit addi "IN EO QUOD EST", quoniam non aliene sed sue substantie bonum est.

But not only that which *is* and which *is something* and, furthermore, either that owing to which it *is* or *is something*, but also that being as such of all things—what we are referring to when we say of something 'it *is*' or 'it *is something*'—has emanated from the one who is truly entitled to the name Author and Creator, which is the Primary Good and which is truly such a good that it is said to be good in such a way that one may correctly add 'in virtue of its being', since it is not good owing to some foreign goodness, but owing to the goodness of its own substance.

The name 'goodness', Gilbert continues, is transferred in a denominative way (*denominative transsumptum*) from that which carries the name owing to its substance, to the things that have emanated from it. This transference occurs not only to the things that *are* and *are something*, and, furthermore, the things owing to which they *are* and *are something* (*que sunt et aliquid sunt itemque ea quibus sunt vel aliquid sunt*), but to their being as such (*ipsum eorum esse*) as well, which is signified when we say of things that they 'are' and 'are something' (*In De hebd.* I, 2, 155).

In the next paragraph this transference of names is labelled in a twofold way, viz. *transsumptiva denominatio* or *denominativa transsumptio*. The term *denominativa transsumptio* is also found in *De Trin.*:

In De Trin. I, 2, 61, p. 91⁶⁸⁻⁷⁰: Atque ideo multa sunt que de istis dicuntur ut sepe etiam efficiendi ratione a coaccidentibus ad ea, quibus coaccidunt, denominativa transsumptio fiat, ut "linea est longa", "albedo est clara".

And to this extent there are many things said of these [sc. qualities] so that also often owing to the notion of something efficient from the coincidental features to the things they are coincidental with a denominative 'transsumption' takes place, for example "the line is long", "whiteness is clear".

Jolivet explains that in this case a transference occurs from the accidents to the forms they are based upon.²⁵ Let us see how Gilbert describes the process of naming involved in the notion of goodness:

²⁴ The significance of this relationship has also been pointed out by Jolivet (1987) *passim*.

²⁵ See Jolivet (1987) 195. I think Nielsen is mistaken when he says that in the example 'whiteness is clear' an attribute is transferred from the effect to its cause, with the explanation that whiteness does not have the form clarity in it, but is the cause of the form of clarity (Nielsen).

In De hebd. I, 2, 156, p. 221⁹⁴⁻¹: Hec autem a Primi Boni essentia ad esse illorum que sunt et aliquid sunt transsumptiva denominatio seu denominativa transsumptio facit ut non modo sint bona sed etiam in eo quod sunt bona sint quecumque hac denominatione sunt bona. TUNC ENIM, quamvis bonitas eorum que sic bona dicuntur non sit essentia, recte tamen additur "IN EO", ut dicatur "in eo quod sunt bona sunt", quandoquidem hec ad illa denominatione translata bonitas est auctoris eorum, i.e. Primi Boni essentia.

This transsumptive denomination or denominative transsumption from the Essence of the Primary Good to the being of things that *are* and *are something*, makes it happen that all the things that are called good by this denomination are not just good, but also that they are good in virtue of its being. Hence although the goodness of the things that are good in this way are not thus in essence, nevertheless it is correctly added "in virtue of", so that it is said "in virtue of their being they are good", since this goodness transferred by the denomination is of the author of those things, that is, the Primary Good, the Essence.

In sum, the term 'goodness' is transferred from the cause (the Primary) to its effects.

If we compare the way in which the terms *esse* and *bonum* are transferred from the Transcendent Domain to the world of creation, there are two small differences. As regards the former, the theological use has its parallel in natural discourse. In theology 'being' as such is preserved for God, whereas the created things *are* in a derived sense only. The very same distinction between an absolute use and a derived sense of 'being' is found in natural discourse as well, in which substance is said to *be par excellence*, whereas quality and quantity *are* in a derived sense only, owing to the substance they form part of. As to goodness, the situation is different. In natural discourse it would be wrong to say that things are good *in eo quod sunt*. The addition has its place in theology alone, with reference to the good will of the Divinity who has created things which can be called good.

Besides the difference as far as the uses of the terms *esse* and *bonum* in natural and theological discourse are concerned, there is one other distinction. When speaking about *esse* when applied to the natural domain, the semantic device Gilbert introduced was called *denominatio extrinseca*, whereas for the use of *bonum* he spoke of *denominatio transsumptiva* or *denominativa transsumptio*. The two kinds of *denominatio* are of a different kind. The transference from the *Esse* of God to the *esse* of creatures turned out to be a case of paronymy, whereas the second process was labelled by Gilbert himself as metonymy.²⁶

sen (1981) 95). Whiteness is defined in terms of its clarity, it is the colour with the highest intensity.

²⁶ Cf. Jolivet (1987) 196.

1.3 On the notions of *unum* and *unitas*

The final term that deserves some attention here is '*unum*'. This expression has been exhaustively dealt with by de Rijk,²⁷ so let me just add a few remarks that pertain to the question this contribution is most concerned with, *viz.* the relationship between saying something, in this case 'one', of the Divine on the one hand, and applying the same term to all kinds of things in the world of creation on the other.

What we are to understand by 'one' is a question that is bound to come up in the commentary on *De Trinitate*. The problem presents itself when we consider the statement that the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit are singularly one God. In commenting upon Boethius's words that in as many ways 'the same' is said, in so many ways is also said 'diverse' (*In De Trin.* I, 1, 20), Gilbert sets out to explain the use of the word 'one' in natural things:

In De Trin. I, 1, 23-24, p. 75⁴⁵⁻⁵⁰: Unde manifestum est 'idem' atque unum ideoque 'diversum' et 'alterum' in naturalibus multipliciter dici. 'Unum' enim vel 'idem' subsistens aliquando dicitur unius tantum nature singularitate, ut "Cicero unus homo et idem quod Tullius immo idem qui Tullius" et "Plato unus rationalis et idem quod suus immo qui suus spiritus".

And so it is evident that 'the same' and 'one', and hence 'diverse' and 'other' in natural things is said in many ways. For a subsistent thing is sometimes called 'one' or 'the same' owing to the singularity of one nature only: e.g. "Cicero <is> one man and the same thing as Tullius, in fact he is the same person as Tullius" and "Plato the rational is one and the same thing, in fact he is the same person as his mind".

In the subsequent passage²⁸ our author explains that numerical identity or the unity just spoken of is not always of the same type. As to the first example, Tullius and Cicero are neither two entities nor diverse things. Taking up the example of Plato and his mind, Gilbert says that these entities *are* diverse. Their diversity can be established by looking into the expressions 'Plato is whatever is his mind, in the order of nature' and 'His mind is whatever Plato is'. The former is true, but the latter is false, because Plato consists of a mind, and mind is but one of his constitutive elements. On the other hand, they are not two numerically diverse things, because it is impossible to assign what these two things should be. This type of 'one' is most properly called a unity, not a union, he concludes. (*In De Trin.* I, 1, 25) And it is by analogy that some unity other than this one can be opposed to it,²⁹ for instance another man, or a stone (*In De Trin.* I, 1, 26).

²⁷ See de Rijk (1989) 26-34.

²⁸ For the quotation and translation of *In De Trin.* I, 1, 25-30 (pp. 76-77), see de Rijk (1989) 32-34.

²⁹ In my opinion Nielsen is wrong to suggest that in *In De Trin.* I, 1, Gilbert is talking about the relationship between things and the "transcendental" (Nielsen obviously means "transcendent") *unum*; see Nielsen (1982) 134. What is at issue is the relationship between the being one

Finally, many subsistent things can be called one and the same, not owing to the singularity of one nature, but owing to the union of many natures, a singularity proceeding from likeness.³⁰ This latter type of union is made up of numerically different things, not only of the subsistent things (e.g. the individuals Cato and Cicero, which are both ‘somethings’), but also of their *subsistentiae*, i.e. their subsistent natures.³¹ (*In De Trin.* I, 1, 29) As far as the accidents are concerned, they do not so much constitute unlikeness, as they demonstrate it. (*In De Trin.* I, 1, 30)

Following his accounts of the terms ‘one’, ‘the same’ and ‘likeness’, our author then proceeds to explain their counterparts, ‘diverse’, ‘unlikeness’. Not surprisingly,

In De Trin. I, 1, 32, p. 77⁹⁶⁻⁹⁸: ut aliqua subsistentium genere vel specie diversa dicantur, oportet earum subsistentias etiam dissimilitudine esse diversas.

in order for some subsistent things to be called diverse qua species or qua genus, it is necessary that their subsistentiae should also be diverse by way of unlikeness.

Thus we can summarise the notions of *unum*, *similitudo* and *idem*: things can be one

– owing to the singularity of one nature, either without a diversity in their *being* (e.g. Tullius and Cicero) or with a diversity in their *being* (or *quo est*) (e.g. Plato and his mind): these types are properly called ‘unity’;

– owing to the likeness of natures, which involves a number of subsistent things and subsistent natures: this type of one is called a union.

Accidents, finally, are such that they reveal diversity between subsistent things.

In *De Trin.* I, 3, the focus is once again on God. In the third passage of the commentary, once again God’s unity is emphasised, this time in terms of the absence of any difference in Him whatsoever. There is no way in which a plurality can be found in God, Gilbert explains:

In De Trin. I, 3-4, p. 101¹⁴—102²²: UBICUMQUE VERO, i.e. sive in uno sive in multis NULLA EST vel essentie et essentie vel accidentis et accidentis vel essentie et accidentis DIFFERENTIA, NULLA EST OMMINO, unde vel illud unum vel illa multa intelligantur esse PLURALITAS. QUARE NEC aliquis eorum, que illi uni vel

of an individual and of some other one thing, by analogy that is, because just as Plato is a unity, in the same way, by analogy, you can call another individual man a unity or an individual stone: “Si quis igitur ab hoc uno [sc. uno subsistente] diversum aliquid in naturalibus cogitet, ratione proportionem convenit ut, omni similitudinis et dissimilitudinis ratione semota, aliud nature quoque singularitate unum illi opponat: ut huic homini hunc alium hominem vel hunc lapidem.” (*In De Trin.* I, 1, 26, p. 76⁶⁴⁻⁶⁷)

³⁰ This kind of union was mentioned earlier, see above p. 214.

³¹ For a detailed explanation of the notion *subsistentia*, see de Rijk (1988a) 80-87. In this connection it is important to see that according to Gilbert’s explanation, the two diverse things, the individuals Cato and Cicero, can make up a union, i.e. they can be alike in their being a man, precisely because not only they are two different subsistent things, but because their being-a-man, their subsistent natures, that is, are two numerically diverse ‘things’ as well.

illis multis esse quod sunt conferant, NUMERUS. IGITUR tam multorum quam unius UNITAS essentie, i.e. una essentia tantum, qua vel Pater vel eius Spiritus et est et est unum et est id quod est, qua etiam simul et equaliter ipsi et sunt et sunt unum et sunt id quod sunt.

So wherever, that is to say in one or in many things, there is no difference between either an essence and <another> essence, or between an accident and <another> accident, or between an essence and an accident, there is no plurality whatsoever, on the basis of which either that thing should be understood as one or those things as many; and therefore there is no number³² of those things that contribute to that one thing or those many things in order to be what they are. Therefore of both many things and of one thing <it is> the unity of essence, that is one essence only, by which either the Father or His Son or the Spirit of Both *is* as well as *is one* and is what *is*, and also by which they are and are one and are what *are* at the same time and equally.

Thus far it has been established that in God there is no plurality at all. It is in this connection that the theologian deals with matters pertaining to enumeration. His remarks deserve some attention here. The first example of counting things he deals with is the mentioning of three men, Plato Aristotle and Cicero, which he then compares with the use of three labels for the Divinity:

In De Trin. 1, 3, 5, p. 102²⁶⁻³¹: ... cum tres sint Plato, Aristoteles, Cicero, et iuxta illorum numerum trina sit "hominis" nuncupatio—quoniam et Plato est homo et Aristotiles est homo et Cicero est homo—et hec trina nuncupatio in quendam sub eodem nomine numerum componatur, secundum quem recte Plato, Aristotiles, Cicero tres homines esse dicuntur: non tamen similiter, quamvis tres sint Pater, Filius, Spiritus Sanctus et iuxta illorum numerum actu dicendi trina sit Dei nuncupatio—quoniam et Pater est Deus et Filius est Deus et Spiritus sanctus est Deus—non, inquam, trina hec nuncupatio componi potest in aliquem sub hoc nomine numerum, ut scilicet recte dici possit "Pater, Filius, Spiritus sanctus sunt tres dii".

To be sure, Plato, Aristotle and Cicero are three and after their number the naming of 'man' is threefold—since Plato is a man and Cicero is a man and Aristotle is a man—and this threefold naming leads to a certain number going under the same name, according to which it is correctly stated that Plato, Aristotle and Cicero are three men. However, <it is> not the same [sc. for the Divinity], <for> although the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit are three and after their number in the act of speaking the naming of God is threefold—since the Father is God and the Son is God and the Holy Spirit is God—this does not mean, I would say, that the naming leads to a certain number going under that name, so that one could rightly say "The Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit are three Gods".

When it comes to counting natural things that belong to one class on the one hand, and counting the 'elements' in the Divinity to be recognised on the

³² One should keep in mind that in Latin *numerus* (like *arithmos* in Greek) always refers to 'more than one', as 'one' is not a number, but the principle of counting (*principium numeri vel numerandi*).

other, there is a major difference in that unlike the latter in the former the very applying of one name three times causes this application to answer to a plurality of things. In terms of semantics: the example of the three men involves a diversity of forms on account of which the singular instances of naming make up a number, while the *significatio* of the name is one *quale aliquid*.³³ As to the Divinity, on the other hand, the 'speech act' of naming three things is all there is.

To sum up, in the Persons (Father, Son and Holy Spirit) there is no distinction whatsoever in Essence and in *subsistentia*. The Divine is One in the true sense of the word. By contrast, the unity of natural things is one by composition.

2. On the notion of forma as the principle of being

In his commentary on *De Trinitate* Gilbert confronts us with the confusion that sets in if we approach the Divinity by the rules with which we study natural things. The resulting errors pertain to the plurality in God. One of the mistakes we can make if we apply the rules of the natural world to God, is that we would have to conclude that God is in fact a plurality on the basis of some dissimilitude in Him.³⁴ The confusion arises from the fact that in theology it is equally true to say in the divided sense (*in sensu diviso*) "The father is God", "The Son is God" and "The Holy Spirit is God", and in the combined sense (*in sensu composito*) "The Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit are God".³⁵ If we were dealing with rules that applied to rational speculation, this would amount to saying that the Father alone in truth of substance is called God, but the Son and the Holy Spirit are neither in truth of substance called God in division, nor are they called God one with the Father.³⁶

The consideration about the confusion of disciplines forms a starting-point for Gilbert to investigate what kind of principles of being are at work in the natural world. In this context it appears that there are certain expressions that indeed apply to the natural world, with reference to a certain way

³³ *In De Trin.* I, 3, 6, p. 102³⁷⁻³⁹: NAM quod de his ter dicitur "homo", propter formarum ... diversitatem singulares ... appellationes aggregantur in numerum ...

³⁴ *In De Trin.* I, 2, 2, p. 78¹⁰⁻¹²: Atque hanc subsistentium alteritatem ex subsistentiarum dissimilium seu similium diversitate esse docuit cum eam genere vel specie vel numero constare subiunxit.

³⁵ *In De Trin.* I, 2, 3, p. 79²²⁻²⁵: ... catholice fidei secundum theologice proprias rationes sententia hec est quod et divisim vere dicitur "Pater est Deus, Filius est Deus, Spiritus Sanctus est Deus" et coniunctim "Pater, Filius, Spiritus Sanctus sunt unus Deus".

³⁶ *In De Trin.* I, 2, 4, p. 79²⁶⁻²⁹: Arrianorum vero secundum naturalium rationes sententia est quod Pater quidem solus veritate substantie dicitur Deus sed neque Filius neque Spiritus sanctus veritate substantie vel divisim Deus vel coniunctim unus cum Patre Deus dicuntur.

in which things are, but also can be used to identify God. One of the expression that fulfils these two roles is '*forma*'.

In the foregoing, one of the ways in which Gilbert analysed the relationship between the different kinds of being, i.e. Being *per se* and being as dependent upon Absolute Being, was in terms of cause and effect. The same relationship also features again in explaining the notion of *forma*. Like 'being', *forma* in its primary sense is used of God. Thus Gilbert explains how one of the ways in which '*forma*' is used is of the essence of God, by calling Him the Primary Form. This use of 'form' is explained as follows:

In De Trin. I, 2, 16, p. 81⁹⁰⁻⁹⁴: Nam essentia Dei, quo Opifice est quicquid est aliquid, et quicquid est esse est esse unde illud est aliquid et omne quod sic inest ei quod est aliquid ut ei quod est esse adsit, "Prima Forma" dicitur.

For the essence of God, owing to whom as the Creator whatever *is* is a something, and whatever is the being through which that thing is a something, and all that inheres in that which is a something such that it accompanies that *esse*, is called 'Primary Form'.³⁷

Thus all created things owe their being to the Primary Form, God. Specifically in this passage the dependency of the created things, the somethings, the formally constitutive elements of a thing, the *subsistentiae*, and the companions of those constituents (the *accidentia*) upon God, as being caused by the Primary Form, is brought to the fore.³⁸

From what has been said so far it appears that *forma* is what I would like to call an analytical notion, that is to say, a term that is used in the analysis of modes of being. In the most authentic sense, in Gilbert's view, the notion of *forma* is used with reference to the Origin of all beings, God. From this origin two meanings of the word 'forma' have derived. First and foremost the term covers the Ideas in God's Mind, the exemplaria; in a secondary sense it can be used to talk about the forms as found in natural things. With regard to the entities in the natural world the term is used as the counterpart of 'matter'. As such it can be used in a number of different ways, viz. (1) for the elements (fire, air, water, and earth), whose constituents are primordial matter (*silva*) and intelligible species,³⁹ (2) the modes of being that answer to the name *subsistentiae*, of which the subsistent thing is also called the matter,⁴⁰ and (3) the accidentia, i.e. the "things that inhere in the subsistent things as 'concomitants'", as de Rijk puts it.⁴¹ Later on the theologian brings up two kinds of *forma simplex*, viz. God and the exemplary Forms after which sensible things have been created.⁴² These are defined in their relation

³⁷ I have drawn heavily on de Rijk's translation of this passage, in de Rijk (1989) 6.

³⁸ See de Rijk (1989) 7.

³⁹ *In De Trin.* I, 2, 17, p. 81⁹⁴-82¹⁰⁰.

⁴⁰ *In De Trin.* I, 2, 18, pp. 82¹⁻⁴.

⁴¹ *In De Trin.* I, 2, 19, p. 82⁵⁻⁷. For the translations of these passages see de Rijk (1989) 6-8.

⁴² *In De Trin.* I, 2, 21-22, pp. 82¹⁵ - 83²⁸.

to matter. The first is identified with *forma nullius materie*, that is to say, form that has no connection with matter whatsoever⁴³ and *forma sine materia*, or a form without matter.⁴⁴

As has been shown by de Rijk, while in *Contra Eut.* it is the forms as enmattered in natural bodies that are spoken of, in the commentary on *De Trin.* Gilbert eventually preserves the proper use of the notion of *forma* for the entities in the transcendent domain, whereas with reference to the forms as inhering in the entities of this world, the immanent forms, the use of *icones* or *imagines* is preferred. The exemplary forms and the *icones* are related in such a way that the latter are likenesses of the former.⁴⁵

So far we have concentrated on concepts that have their origin in the Transcendent Domain and can also be used for things in the sublunary world. Sometimes the same words as applied to the former are used for created beings as well—albeit in a derived sense—through a process of denomination; terms of this type are *esse* and *bonum*. The notion of *forma*, on the other hand, is most properly used for the Transcendent Domain, whereas with reference to natural entities the terms *icones* or *imagines* are preferable.

The underlying ontological principle enabling us to use names originating from the of the Transcendent Domain is of course the idea that the sublunary world is completely dependent upon the act of Creation of God. The process of naming that reflects this dependency can be explained with reference to the Platonic conception of participation.

In the following the focus is upon naming from the perspective of created entities, in which I shall confine myself to *persona*. Obviously the notion of participation will not be of any use when it comes to explaining a ‘from the bottom upwards’ process of naming. In fact, one may wonder whether the term *persona* as used for created entities and the Supreme being can be associated with each other at all.

3. The notion of persona applied to God

The concept of persona is the most important one that despite the fact that it has a sublunary origin, so to speak, can also be used to designate the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost. In order to gain insight into Gilbert’s views regarding this notion, it will be useful to look at related concepts. Most important in this connection is of course the analysis of man, to which I shall devote some attention first.

⁴³ De Rijk has ‘a form without any kind of composition’, see de Rijk (1989) 9.

⁴⁴ Again for the passages and translations see de Rijk (1989) 9-10.

⁴⁵ See de Rijk (1989) 15.

3.1 Gilbert's anthropology

In *De hebdomadibus* it is stated that man is a composite entity, a *compositio*, that is to say, it is composed of mutually diverse subsistent things from which it is different; for man these mutually diverse subsistent things are his flesh and bones, or his body, and his mind (*In De hebdomadibus* I, 65, p. 201⁶⁸⁻⁷²). Note that in this sense, the term *compositio* refers to a thing's consisting of diverse subsistent things.

3.1.1 A short survey of the uses of *natura*

The notion of *natura* has been extensively dealt with by de Rijk.⁴⁶ Following in his footsteps, I shall summarise the most important features of the term *natura* in so far as it pertains to the discussion about *persona*.

As de Rijk has shown, the term *natura* generally speaking can be conceived of in four ways, according to Gilbert. In the most general sense it is used for all the things that are, in the sense that it covers whatever can in some way be grasped by the intellect, including *subsistentiae*, accidents, God and primordial matter. In this sense *natura* has *nichil* as its counterpart: whatever is not or is not a something, is by no means a nature. Moreover, when *natura* is applied in this way, it is used for both the transcendent domain as well as the domain of created being.⁴⁷ A more restricted definition of *natura* allows it to be identified with *subsistentiae* alone, and identifies it with "that which can affect something or be affected" (*natura est vel quod facere vel quod pati possit; In Contra Eut.* I, 44, p. 251⁴⁹⁻⁵⁰). In this sense it has the same extension as the term *substantia*.⁴⁸ Thirdly the term *natura* is explained as the principle of motion, which is the Peripatetician definition. Finally, Gilbert brings up a Boethian definition of *natura*, in which the term *natura* is linked up with the verb *nascor* (to be born). In this sense *natura* is used with reference to the constitutive element of natural things, *i.e.* in Gilbert's view, most properly a thing's *subsistentia*. In the discussion on *persona*, however, to which we shall turn shortly, accidents are also covered by the term *natura*.⁴⁹

3.1.2 Gilbert's account of *persona*

Following Boethius, Gilbert begins the analysis of *persona* by looking into the relation it has to the concept of *natura*. The question that needs to be dealt with first is whether *persona* is to be identified with *natura* or not. Returning to the notion of *natura*, he begins by remarking that

⁴⁶ De Rijk (1988a) 106-111.

⁴⁷ De Rijk (1988a) 107-108.

⁴⁸ De Rijk (1988a) 108-109.

⁴⁹ De Rijk (1988a) 109-111.

In Contra Eut. II, 2, p. 265¹²⁻¹⁵: Natura, sicut dictum est, aut de solis specificis differentiis aut de solis corporibus aut de omnibus substantiis aut de omnibus rebus dicitur. Persona vero aut de his quibus convenit, aut de his quibus non convenit nomen 'nature' predicatur.

As has been said, 'nature' is said either of specific differences alone, or of bodies alone, or of all substances or of all things. 'Person', on the other hand, is said either of those things to which the name 'nature' applies, or of those things to which the name 'nature' does not apply.

Now if it were the case, the theologian continues, that each and everything that has a nature should also have a *persona*, that is to say,

In Contra Eut. II, 3, p. 265¹⁸⁻²⁰: si de omnibus que secundum quamlibet predictarum, ut dictum est, significationum dicuntur "natura", predicatur persona, sensus: si omnis natura est persona

if of all the things that according to any one of the significations mentioned above, as has been said, are called 'nature' the predicate 'persona' is used—meaning: if every nature is a person,

in other words, if the extension of the nouns 'nature' and 'person' were the same, there would be no way to distinguish between the two, even though there might be a difference between the quality, or intension of the nouns 'nature' and 'person'. The first thing then is to decide to what kinds of natures the label 'person' can be applied.

Keeping in mind that the term 'nature' covers both substances and accidents, the first kind of nature that is disqualified is the accident.⁵⁰ The only candidate, then, is substance, and the philosophical use of the term 'person' is restricted to rational natures. However, that is not all there is to it, because besides being applicable to substances that are of a rational nature only, that is to say certain kinds of substances, the noun 'person' is also confined to those natures that are individual things, Boethius says. In his words:

Contra Eut. II, p. 84⁴⁷⁻⁴⁹: Nusquam in universalibus persona dici potest, sed in singularibus tantum atque in individuis.

One can never say 'persona' in universal things, but in singular things only and in individuals.

Considering the addition *atque in individuis*, Gilbert sets out to explain that there is a difference between being singular and being individual. To summarise this distinction: first there are the singular things that are mutually similar to other things owing to their entire proper natures. It is on the basis of this conformity that all these things are called *unum dividuum*, a divisible one.⁵¹ As has been pointed out by Nielsen, the things meant here are most

⁵⁰ *In Contra Eut.* II, 11, p. 267⁶⁸⁻⁶⁹: Accidentes vero non possint esse persone.

⁵¹ *In Contra Eut.* II, 29, p. 270⁷⁴⁻⁷⁶: Singularium namque alia aliis sunt tota proprietate sua inter se similia. Que simul omnia conformitatis huius ratione dicuntur "unum dividuum".

likely the forms of individual things.⁵² Again there are singular things that are dissimilar to all things owing to some part of their proper nature. And it is on the basis of this dissimilarity that these things alone are individuals, such as this stone, this piece of wood, this horse and this man.⁵³ The distinctive mark of being an individual as opposed to being merely singular is being an indivisible and incommunicable unity as opposed to being a divisible one.⁵⁴ And in order to qualify as a person, a thing must be an individual unity.

Having discussed Boethius's position on the links between the notions of *persona* and *natura*, as well as the way in which singularity and individuality is tied up with personality, the next item looked into is how the concepts of *substantia* and *persona* are related. The definition Gilbert sets out to discuss runs: "person is the individual substance of a rational nature" (*persona est nature rationalis individua substantia*; *Contra Eut.* III, 2, p. 271¹⁴). The problem with that definition, Gilbert explains, is that it is too extensive. For considering the fact that the soul of any human being, on the basis of which it is divided from all things that are not that soul, is individual in its property, this would imply that the human soul, which is a constitutive part of a human being, should also have to be considered a person.⁵⁵

The idea that the soul of man in its capacity of being a constitutive part of his should be a person seems out of the question, because a person can never be part of a person. To show why this cannot be, Gilbert first explains to us the semantics of the concept of personhood. The defining characteristic of person is that it is something one, and is explained in terms of the total sum of his properties:

In Contra Eut. III, 5, p. 272²⁸⁻³³: Omnis enim persona adeo est per se una quod cuiuslibet plena et ex omnibus que illi conveniunt collecta proprietas cum alterius persone similiter plena et ex omnibus collecta proprietate de uno vero individuo predicari non potest: ut Platonis et Ciceronis personales proprietates de uno individuo dici non possunt.

For a person is one to the very extent that of every one the entire property and collection of all the things that come to it cannot be truly said of one individual together with likewise the entire property and collection of all the things of another person that come to it: such as the personal properties of Plato and Cicero cannot be said of one individual.

⁵² Cf. Nielsen (1982) 61, and de Rijk (1988a) 78.

⁵³ *In Contra Eut.* II, 30, p. 270⁷⁸⁻⁸⁰: Alia vero ab aliis omnibus aliqua sue proprietatis parte dissimila. Que sola et omnia sunt dissimilitudinis ratione individua, ut hic lapis, hoc lignum, hic equus, hic homo.

⁵⁴ See de Rijk (1988a) 78-79.

⁵⁵ *In Contra Eut.* III, 4, p. 272²³⁻²⁶: Est etiam cuiuslibet hominis anima ... sua, qua ab omnibus que non sunt illa anima dividitur, proprietate individua. Sic igitur anima, que hominis est pars constitutiva, videtur recte esse persona.

So in this case what Gilbert shows is that to be a person for one thing means that the total sum of the personal properties of one person cannot be truly said of another person. The ontological correlate of this account is found in the commentary on *De Trin.*, where it is stated that the collection of ontological constituents is different for each person:

In De Trin. I, 5, 32, p. 146¹⁴⁻¹⁶: Plato vero a Cicero ita est alius quod et nullo eorum alter quibus alter est, et omnino nichil est quod sit omnibus his quibus uterque est.

Plato is other than Cicero in such a way that both by none of the things the one *is*, the other *is*, and that there is nothing whatsoever that *is* owing to all the things by which both *are*.

The fact that the totality of properties of one person cannot be transferred to another person explains why a part of his cannot be considered a person.

In Contra Eut. III, 12, p. 274⁷⁷⁻⁸⁰: Albedo vero ipsius [i.e. Platonis] et quecumque pars proprietatis eius aut natura et actu aut saltem natura intelligitur esse conformis. Ideoque nulla pars proprietatis cuiuslibet creature naturaliter est individua, quamvis ratione singularitatis "individua" sepe vocatur.

For his [i.e. Plato's] whiteness and whatever part of this property, either by nature and in actuality, or at least by nature is understood as being conform <to other white things>. Hence no part of the property of any creature is naturally individual, even though on account of its singularity it is often called 'individual'.

In this connection it is the conformity with other things of a certain nature that prevents that very nature from being individual.

One remark should be made now about the distinction between *natura* and *persona*. Colish states that it is difficult to see how Gilbert can distinguish between a human nature and a human person, "given the definition of *natura* on the human level".⁵⁶ The fact that Colish fails to see how the two are distinguished is, I think, due to her assumption that because the name 'nature' can be applied to things on the level of subsistent things,⁵⁷ there is no formal distinction between *persona* and *natura*. Moreover, in the previous quote it has also been shown how singular things, natures in the broad sense of the term, are not individual in the sense intended in the present context, and this absence of individuality in them also makes them unlikely candidates for being *persone*.

In his commentary on *De Trin.*, Gilbert indirectly—indirectly that is, because here the startingpoint is the expression *per se una*)—lays down the ontological criteria for personhood in the broad sense, i.e. insofar as the label covers other natural things besides human beings. The thing identified as a 'person' should be *per se* one, that is, it is *one* owing to the singularity

⁵⁶ Colish (1987) 237.

⁵⁷ Colish (1987) 236.

of the things owing to which it has *being*, it is *individual* on account of the dissimilarity of the constituent, owing to which that constituent can be combined with nothing other than itself, and, finally, that other thing, which in the domain of natural things is something other than the thing in question, owes its being to none of the things taken as a collection or by themselves through which the latter is something.⁵⁸ This unity is the total form of a single being mentioned above, or total property, as is pointed out in *Contra Eut.*:

In Contra Eut. III, 17, p. 274⁹⁹⁻²: Ex his ergo intelligitur quia persona adeo est per se una quod eius tota proprietates nulli prorsus secundum se totam similitudine conferri potest, nulli ad constituendam personalem proprietatem coniungi.

From this it is understood that because a person is *per se* one to the very extent that his total property cannot be transferred to anything in its neighbourhood by a likeness taken in its totality, it cannot be conjoined with anything to constitute a personal property.

To sum up, for natural things to be a person, what is required is that its total form is incommunicable. Of course this definition rules out any constitutive part, to the extent that constitutive parts of a person can be found in other things. For instance, body and mind in man do not qualify for that label, nor does nature in the sense of *subsistentia*.

From this discussion it is clear that the semantic account of *persona* has its origin in the created world, more specifically, in the domain of natural things. Of course the term is used in theology as well. However, it cannot possibly be used in that connection in the same way as for natural things. Gilbert recognises this distinction,⁵⁹ and explains first how the term 'person' is applied in theology:

In De Trin. I, 5, 38, p. 147⁴¹⁻⁴⁷: In theologicis vero certum est quod Pater alius est a Filio et a Spiritu Sancto et Filius alius a Spiritu Sancto et Spiritus Sanctus a Patre et a Filio alius, et quod unusquisque horum trium est illa singulari ac simplici et individua et sola usia, i.e. essentia, hoc quod est qua alius est unus et simplex et individuus et absque diverse essentie consortio Deus, ita quod ipsi tres simul sunt unus essentie proprietate.

In theological matters, however, it is certain that the Father is other than the Son and the Holy Spirit and that the Son is other than the Father and the Holy Spirit and that the Holy Spirit is other than the Father and the Son, and that each one of these three is what it is owing to that single, simple, individual and only *usia*, that is the essence by which the other is the one and the simple and

⁵⁸ *In De Trin.* I, 5, 34, p. 146²⁴⁻²⁸: Et in naturalibus quidem sic est per se una quaecumque res "persona" vocatur, ut scilicet et cuiuslibet illorum quibus est singularitate una sit, et dissimilitudine illius quo nulli a se alii potest uniri individua, et nulla illorum quibus ipsa est aliquid simul et singulariter illa sit que in naturalium genere ab eadem est illa. For the translation of this paragraph, see de Rijk (1988a) 79.

⁵⁹ Hence I do not understand Nielsen's remark that Gilbert can "reasonably consider the word *persona* as univocal" when used for the Creator and creation; see Nielsen (1982) 181.

the individual God without a sharing of a diverse essence, so that taken together these three are one in the property of their essence.

Indeed, the noun *persona* can be used for each one of the theological persons. But one should be aware of the fact that there is a major difference between using it for the domain of nature and the Transcendent Domain. For it is obvious (*manifestum est*), the theologian states, that

In De Trin. I, 5, 39, p. 147⁴⁹⁻⁵⁵: hoc nomen quod est “persona” theologicis minime convenire secundum plenitudinem eius a qua nomen est rationis, sed ex proportione, que in eiusdem rationis parte convenit, a naturalibus ad illa esse transsumptum. Quod enim de naturalibus dictum est—personam aliquam ita esse per se unum ut nullo illorum quibus est ipsa sit alia—non convenit theologicis personis. Immo eodem quo est una est alia.

the noun *persona* does not in the least apply to theological beings according to the fulness of the significative content by which it is a name, but is transported to those things from the domain of the natural things, on the basis of a proportional similitude, which applies for a part of the significative content of the word. For what has been said about natural things—that some person is *per se* one to the extent that there is no other one thing owing to any of the things [i.e. constitutive elements] by which the thing in question is—does not apply to the theological persons. Rather, by the same thing by which it is the one, it is the other.

This much is clear now: the noun ‘person’ has its origin in the domain of natural things, and has a very limited use in theological matters. As Gilbert explains, only part of the significative content of *persona* applies to the Divine persons. In the domain of natural things the difference in the constitutive elements of the things is the basis for their being different persons, and, consequently, the foundation of the assignment of different accessory appellations (*extrinsecus affixa predicamenta*), that is, names that belong to the seven categories besides substance, quality and quantity.⁶⁰ This does not mean, however, that the natural things and theological entities cannot be compared with each other, somehow. There are limits, as Gilbert shows, to our using certain names for one and the same thing, both with reference to natural entities and theological *persone*. For example, the generator (*genitor*) is other than the generated (*genitus*), and the connection between the generated and the born (*conexio genitoris natique*) is another yet again (*In De Trin.* I, 5, 41). So it is not because there *are* three different things, but because the names just mentioned cannot be applied to one individual that we can talk about three persons:

In De Trin. I, 5, p. 148⁷³⁻⁷⁶: Theologie vero persone quoniam eius quo sunt singularitate unum sunt et simplicitate id quod sunt, essentialium oppositione a se invicem alie esse non possunt. Sed harum, que dicte sunt, extrinsecus affixarum rerum oppositione a se invicem alie et probantur et sunt.

⁶⁰ For more details about this expression, see de Rijk (1988a) 100f.

Now it is because the theological persons are one on account of the singularity of that owing to which they *are*, and on account of the simplicity thereof are what they *are*, they cannot be different from each other owing to an opposition of essences. But owing to the opposition of the aforesaid accessory things they are proved and indeed *are* different from each other.

Thus it is on a very meagre basis indeed, to wit owing to a distinction in accessory appellations, that the divine persons can qualify for the noun *persona*.

4. Concluding remarks

In this contribution I have attempted to clear up some puzzles regarding Gilbert's ideas about the difference in the ways in which certain expressions are used for the world of creation and the Transcendent Domain. Starting with the latter, the relationship can be explained in terms of ontological dependency (*esse*) and cause and effect (*bonum*), among others. Starting from a sublunary origin, the concept of *persona* was dealt with. Once again there is no doubt in my mind that *persona* is not a univocal term for these two domains. Considering that the principles of being on the two levels are so alien from each other, such an account would be impossible. The use of *persona* in the domain of the natural world precisely occurs from the multitude of constitutive elements at work in natural entities, a multitude that is totally absent in God. And Gilbert's insistence that for the Divine the use of *persone* is only a matter of *extrinsecus affixa predicata*, I think, confirms this view.

That there is still unclarity about the transference of vocabularies from one domain to the other is not something we should blame on Gilbert. He is very insistent about the ways in which the terms involved can and cannot apply. Of course what kind of being is behind all our talk about God will forever remain a mystery to us: to use Gilbert's words, He may be intelligible, but He is by no means comprehensible.⁶¹

⁶¹ *In Contra Eut.* I, 26, p. 247³⁷⁻³⁸: Nam [Deus] intelligibilis quidem est, non vero comprehensibilis.

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CHAPTER NINE

GRAMMAR AND SEMANTICS IN THE TWELFTH CENTURY: PETRUS HELLIAS AND GILBERT DE LA PORRÉE ON THE SUBSTANTIVE VERB

C.H. KNEEPKENS

1. Introduction

The philosophers of the late eleventh and twelfth centuries took great pains with getting a grip on the verb 'to be'. In fact, this is not surprising. Already in Antiquity the substantive verb had taken a lot of thought,¹ and it has continued doing so to this day.² For the scholars of the eleventh and twelfth centuries, the essence of the problem was the double significative function of this verb: (1) signifying the existence of the subject of which it is said and (2) functioning as the copulative verb. We must bear in mind that it was not only scholarly curiosity or the intention of linguists to get a grip on language phenomena or a feeling for order which stimulated the grammarians and logicians to occupy themselves with systematising the linguistic heritage left by the Ancient grammarians; they were guided, to a high degree, by theological and philosophical interests.

In this article, it is my intention to focus on some linguistic aspects of the twelfth-century approach to the substantive verb, and on some aspects of the metaphysical and theological framework within which this approach was realised.

In the eleventh and twelfth centuries the discussions on the substantive verb were mainly fixed on its significative function. Two semantic levels were at stake, which in the thirteenth century were called the *significatio specialis* and *significatio generalis* or *modus significandi essentialis* respectively. The difference between the *significatio specialis* and *significatio generalis* is that the *significatio generalis* concerns the general significative functions of a word which cause that word to belong to the part of speech to

¹ Cf. Kahn (1973); Lyons (1977), 437-438; de Rijk (1981), 33-35; Jacobi (1986); de Rijk (1988a), 1-2; de Rijk (1988b), 13-15; de Rijk (1996), 273.

² Cf. Lyons (1977), vol. 2, 469-481.

which it belongs, while the *significatio specialis* concerns the lexicographical meaning of the verb.³

Generally, we find the *significatio generalis* described in the definition or in the *proprium* of a part of speech. Here we are already confronted with a phenomenon which was, for the medieval grammarians, one of the basic problems of verbal signification. The Latin grammarian Priscian (s. VI) had described the verb as that part of speech which “signifies an action (*actio*) or a being acted upon (*passio*) or both, with the secondary grammatical categories of mode, form and tense, but without that of case”.⁴ So the verbal *significatio generalis* is: signifying an action and/or a being acted upon, with mode, form and tense, but without a case ending. A word cannot be classified a verb if any part of it is lacking. On the other hand, the *significatio specialis* of the verb is the particular meaning which each verb has, and by which it distinguishes itself from every other verb. It is the so-called *res verbi*; it can be expressed substantively, and is the core of the lexicographic meaning of a verb, for instance: the *res verbi* of the verb *currere* is *cursus*, of the verb *videre* *visus*, etc.⁵

This semantic analysis did not cause any serious problem for the medievals as long as they were considering the “normal” verbs, but in the case of the substantive verb the situation appears much more complicated. When we consider its *significatio generalis*, would it be possible to say that the substantive verb signifies an action or a being acted upon? Furthermore, it is not obvious what the lexicographical meaning of this verb exactly is. These questions were often raised and discussed from the middle of the eleventh century onwards.⁶ In the works of the grammarians of the period we frequently come across annotated surveys of the most important opinions, sometimes even provided with the name or the initials of the master who held the view at issue. More than once it is evident that a view on the signification function of the substantive verb had an obvious link with a theological theory, although, especially in the older period, it is quite difficult to establish this relationship exactly. Guy of Langres’s view is a fine example. This master must have been active not later than the third quarter of the eleventh century. He also tried to attribute the *actio/passio* signification to the substantive verb, for Guido is said to have taught that the substantive

³ For these notions see Pinborg (1967), 27-28, 35; Braakhuis (1979), 175sq., 333sq.; Rosier (1995), 137-138; Braakhuis (1997), 310-311; Kneepkens (1999).

⁴ Prisc., *Inst. gram.*, II, 18, ed. Hertz, I, 55, 8-9: *Proprium est verbi actionem sive passionem sive utrumque cum modis et formis et temporibus sine casu significare.*

⁵ Cf. Prisc., *Inst. gram.*, XVIII, 43, ed. Hertz, II, 226, 6-8: *significat autem infinitum ipsam rem, quam continet verbum. ‘currere’ enim est ‘cursus’ et ‘scribere: scriptura’ et ‘legere: lectio’*; Petrus Helias, *Summa*, ed. Reilly, p. 448, 16-18: *Et puto quod si proprie loqui velimus dicendum erit quod nomina verbalia ut ‘lectio’, et ‘visio’ et similia significant actionem et passionem, cuius modi auctor iste res verborum appellat.*

⁶ See for instance the APPENDIX of the pioneering study by R.W. Hunt (Hunt (1943), 224-231), and de Rijk (1967I), pp. 101-108.

verb has an *actio* signification in propositions about God only, whereas we are confronted exclusively with the *passio* signification in propositions about the created world. He adduced support for his thesis from Macrobius, who argued that the verb *stare* has an active meaning in the proposition "a man is standing", but a passive meaning in "the lance is standing".⁷ Unfortunately, we do not have further information about this master Guy of Langres, so that it is not possible to confront this part of his semantics with his theological theory.

In the second quarter of the twelfth century it was the common opinion of the grammarians that the lexicographic meaning of the substantive verb, its *significatio specialis*

, is to signify substance. William of Conches and Peter Helias,⁸ *inter alios*, agree in this respect. It appears, however, that these authors and their colleagues had divergent views about what exactly was meant by 'substance' in this context. In this article I intend to pay special attention to the opinions of two authors whose views on the substantive verb were already considered opposites by their contemporaries, viz. Peter Helias and Gilbert de la Porrée, and on the consequences of these views for their linguistics.

2. Peter Helias and the Substantive Verb

I take Peter Helias as my starting point. Although he was not the most original thinker in linguistics of his period, he was, in all probability, the most influential. Helias was active as a teacher in the middle of the twelfth cen-

⁷ See Hunt (1943), 224 (MS Chartres, B.M., 209, f. 86^v): Wido Lingonensis dicebat hoc uerbum significare actionem in solo deo, ut cum dicimus 'Deus est', passionem uero in omnibus rebus creatis, sicut cum dicimus 'Homo est', 'Asinus est' et sic in ceteris. Et hanc sententiam uidetur traxisse a Macrobio, qui dicit 'stare' significare actionem et passionem. Cum dicimus 'Homo stat', ibi 'stat' significat actionem, quia per se stat homo; cum uero dicimus 'Hasta stat', ibi significat passionem, quia non nisi infixata ab aliquo stare potest. (cf. Macrobius, *Comm. in Somn. Scip.*, 2, 15, 14-15, ed. Willis, 142, 22-24.)

⁸ For William of Conches, cf. de Rijk (1967I), p. 107: Dicamus igitur: omne uerbum significat actionem vel passionem, aut aliquid eorum que possunt responderi ad '*quid agit* uel *patitur?*' ex prima inuentione; et si aliud aliquid significant, ex adiuncto hoc habent, ut '*est*' substantiam significat.

For Peter Helias, see de Rijk (1967I), p. 108: Dicimus ergo quod '*sum*, *es*' significat substantiam, scilicet ut de altero, scilicet cum tempore, et in ueruali terminatione. (ed. Reilly, p. 201, 41-42).

We find a similar view in the *Absoluta cuiuslibet*, a *summa* on the *Priscianus minor* dating in all probability from the last decades of the twelfth century: Verbum substantium eandem et eodem modo significat substantiam quam et pronomen. Cum enim dico '*sum*', eandem intelligo substantiam quam hoc pronomine '*ego*'. Et cum dico '*es*', eandem intelligo quam hoc pronomine '*tu*': similiter meram, quoniam nulla circa eam forma determinatur. Similiter '*est*' significat substantiam meram sicut pronomen, sed tamen confuse, quod non habet facere pronomen, quod in tertia determinationem exigit. Cum enim dico '*est*', intelligo quod iste uel ille uel alius. Intelligo enim ibi tertiam personam. Sed nescio quam absque forme respectu. Verum differentia est, quia '*sum*' significat illam substantiam ut de altero dicitur, hoc est in ueruali terminatione; '*ego*' ut alteri supponitur, id est in casuali proprietate. (ed. Kneepkens, p. 16).

ture at Paris and wrote a comprehensive interpreting survey of Priscian's *Institutiones grammaticae*, his *Summa super Priscianum*.⁹ As happened quite often in the Middle Ages, Helias did not immediately write a definitive work, unchangeable for eternity. We have at our disposal an earlier version of his *Summa* in which he comments on books XVII and XVIII, Priscian's syntax, which has been preserved in the MS Paris, BnF, lat. 15121. Later on, he reworked it and incorporated the revision into what was probably his final version.¹⁰ It is unfortunate that the early redaction has not yet been edited, for it appears that it is highly important to the present investigation.

William of Tyre made an important remark about Helias's career. He mentions explicitly that Helias was a student of Thierry of Chartres.¹¹ Since other sources are lacking, this doctrinal relationship allows us, in all probability, a glance at the ontological and theological framework within which Helias's reflections on the substantive verb were developed.

2.1 The Meaning of the Substantive Verb

Prompted by a discussion on the general significative functions of the verb, Peter Helias argued that the verbs were primarily invented to indicate something about a substance, i.e. a subject in the outer world, sc. what this substance/subject acts or what it is acted upon. So a part of the primary general function of a verb is to signify "what is said about another thing (*de altero*)", or, speaking on the level of logic, it is the verb's function to be a predicate. This does not originate from Priscian, but stems from Aristotle's discussion of the verb in his *De interpretatione*.¹² What is signified by a verb, however, is an *actio* or a *passio*:

[*Summa*, ed. Reilly, p. 195, 25-29] Verba quoque que primo reperta sunt propter actiones et passiones, reperta sunt, ut, scilicet, designarent de substantia quid ageret vel pateretur. Reperta sunt itaque verba ad significandum quid de altero dicitur et primo propter actionem et passionem, ut dictum est, quemadmodum nomina primo reperta sunt propter substantias.

In Helias's treatment of the substantive verb both significative functions mentioned above were discussed: (1) does the substantive verb signify an *actio* or a *passio* like the other verbs, and (2) what is its lexical meaning, its *res verbi*? According to Helias, the substantive verb derives its name from the very fact that it signifies substance as its particular meaning: it has been called 'substantive verb' because it signifies substance. Helias emphasises

⁹ For a survey of Peter Helias's life, see Reilly's introduction to the edition of the *Summa super Priscianum*, at pp. 11-13.

¹⁰ Cf. Kneepkens (1981), 68 and Reilly's introduction, p. 7.

¹¹ See Huygens (1962), 822; Fredborg (1988), 6, and Reilly's introduction to Helias's *Summa*, p. 11, n. 1; for a doctrinal relationship, cf. Rosier (1987), 301.

¹² Arist., *De interpr.*, c. 3.16b10-11; Arist. *Lat.*, II, 1-2, ed. Minio-Paluello, p. 7, 6-7: "et semper eorum quae de altero dicuntur nota est".

that this verb does not signify an action, but that it signifies substance in the way of an action. Signifying in the way of an action means that it signifies its *res verbi* as said about something else under the co-signification of tense and by means of the typical verbal endings. "As being said of something else" (*ut de altero dicitur*) implies that it is said of a substance, a subject in the outside world:

[*Summa*, ed. Reilly, p. 201, 41-49] Dicimus ergo quod 'sum es' significat substantiam, sed ut de altero dicitur, scilicet, cum tempore et in verbali terminatione.

...

Verbum enim substantivum non id quod est actio significat sed solam substantiam. Idcirco tamen actionem dicitur significare quia licet significet substantiam modo tamen actionis eam significat, ut determinatum est.

It appears, however, that for Helias the term 'substance' is not unambiguous. On several occasions he stresses that this term has three meanings, sc. a) *substantia a substando* = the Greek *ypostasis*, b) *substantia a subsistendo* = the Greek *usyosis*, and c) *substantia tam a substando quam a subsistendo* = the Greek *usia*:

[*Summa*, ed. Reilly, pp. 623, 33-624, 54] Ut autem totum hoc apercius intelligatur videndum est quod substantia apud nos tribus modis accipitur. Uno equidem modo dicitur substantia a 'substando' et dicitur a Grecis *ypostasis* ab *ypo*, quod est 'sub', et *stasis*, quod est 'stans' vel 'status', secundum quam acceptionem de primordiali materia hoc nomen 'substantia' iure dicitur. Quoniam enim formis omnibus substat merito substantia a 'substando' nominatur.

Secundum aliam iterum acceptionem dicitur substantia a 'subsistendo' et dicitur a Grecis *usyosis*, id est, 'subsistentia', secundum quam acceptionem convenit forme cuiusmodi est humanitas, que idcirco dicitur subsistentia quia sub se sistit quodammodo fluxum materie quam informat

Dicitur etiam tercio modo substantia tam a 'substando' quam a 'subsistendo', et tunc a Grecis *usia*, a nobis autem proprie 'essentia', secundum quam acceptionem convenit composito ex utroque, id est, rei ex materia et forma constanti, que ex materia quidem contrahit proprietatem substandi, ex forma vero proprietatem subsistendi. Propter materiam enim formis tam substantialibus quam accidentalibus habet substatere, propter formam vero determinatum quid est et distinctum, quod est rem ipsam subsistere.¹³

¹³ The same discussion is found in Peter's section on the difference of meaning between the noun and the verb in his comment on Priscian's book XVII, cf. *Summa*, ed. Reilly, pp. 861, 22-863, 68; 918, 25-919, 38; cf. Rosier (1987), 311, who points to the striking similarity between Helias's text and the so-called *Tractatus de Trinitate* and *Commentarius Victorinus de Trinitate*, both texts originating from the school of Thierry of Chartres (cf. Häring's introduction to his edition of the commentaries on Boethius by Thierry of Chartres and his School, p. 33 and pp. 38-45; for the text see the ed. p. 303 and p. 525); for Helias's connection with the teaching of Thierry of Chartres, see above, p. 240. The possible date of composition of these two texts is, however, uncertain and in all probability they had not yet been composed when Helias wrote his *Summa*.

We encounter the application of the three Boethian notions of substance to the discussion on the substantive verb in the so-called third version of William of Conches's *Glose super Priscianum*, which has been preserved in MS Oxford, Bodl., Laud lat. 68, ff. 15^{ra}-19^{va}. Here Wil-

It appears in the discussion of the substantive verb that for Helias 'substance' in the first meaning is the *res verbi* of this verb. He is not willing to accept a purely actional interpretation of the substance of the substantive verb as the *actus substandi* or the suppositing of a thing to substantial or accidental forms:

[*Summa*, ed. Reilly, p. 509, 63-70] Sed queretur an verbum substantivum significet substantiam hoc generalissimum, quod nos plane negamus. Sed significat substantiam, id est, rem ut formis substantem vel ut aliorum sibi unitivam sed indifferenter. Videri tamen poterit alicui facile quod verbum substantivum significet substantiam ut dicitur a 'substando', id est, actum substandi, sive mavis dicere rei suppositionem formis substantialibus sive accidentalibus. Sed prima sententia, ut puto, prevalet. Dicatur ergo 'sum' significare ut dicitur a 'substando', ita tamen ut dicitur de altero, quemadmodum dictum est.

He also refuses to accept the substance signified by the substantive verb as the *copulatio essendi aliquid*. He maintains a static (= matter), not an active (= form) substance interpretation. In his view this substance is a thing, a *res* and not an *actus*:

[*Summa*, ed. Reilly, p. 510, 90-94] Erunt etiam fortasse qui dicant verba <substantiva> significare substantiam id est, copulationem essendi aliquid, verba vero vocativa significare nominationem, id est, nominum copulationem. Sed ea quam premisimus sententiam eis que in Libro constructionum de huiusmodi dicuntur magis esse videtur consentanea.

But Helias has still another problem to solve, sc. how to interpret this '*substantia a substando*'? On several occasions he argues that the proper meaning of 'substance' as derived from '*substare*' is to signify the primordial matter. We need to bear mind, however, that the three substance interpretations do not originate from Helias, but stem from Boethius's *Contra Euty-*

liam calls the noun 'substance' equivocal because it has three different meanings, sc. to signify (1) the thing existing on its own (*res per se existens*), (2) that which a thing existing on its own is said to be by its appellative noun, and (3) the *actus subsistendi*: (MS Oxford, Bodl. Lib., Laud. lat. 67, f. 18^{vb}; cf. Reilly (1975), 594 and Rosier (1987), 312) Nos vero aliter et in principio, hoc nomen substantia est equivocum quia dicitur substantia res per se existens et illud quod per se existens [extra *MS/Reilly/Rosier*] dicitur esse per suum nomen appellativum et actus subsistendi. Unde hoc nomen his grecis [equivocis *Reilly*] tribus equipollet scilicet ipostasis, usia, usion, nec mirum si actus subsistendi dicitur substantia cum actus vivendi dicitur vita. Unde dicimus quod 'sum' significat actionem scilicet actum [*Rosier* actus *Reilly*] subsistendi.

The necessity of correcting the reading '*extra*' to '*existens*' becomes unavoidable when one bears in mind William's remark about the meaning of the noun 'substance' in grammar provoked by Priscian, *Inst. gram.*, XVII, 23, ed. Hertz, vol. II, p. 122, 1-2: nam substantiam alicuius suppositi quaerentes dicimus 'quis movetur? quis ambulat? ...'. William's reflection on Priscian's text, in the later redaction of his *Glose super Priscianum*, is as follows: (MS Paris, BnF, lat. 15130, f. 95^{va}; cf. Rosier (1987), 312) nota quod in hac arte dicitur substantia res per se existens et id quod res per se existens dicitur esse cum queritur quid sit, et suppositum dicitur actuale quod subiaceret locutioni ...; some lines further William returns to this topic; it appears that substance in the second meaning applies to Aristotle's *secundae substantiae*: generalis substantia est id quod res per ap<p>ellativum nomen dicitur esse, quod a dialecticis secunda substantia dicitur.

chen, III. Boethius states that that which the Greeks indicate with the term 'hypostasis' is called 'persona' by the Romans:

[CEut., III, ed. Stewart/Rand/Tester, p. 88, 62-65] Ideo autem hypostaseis Graeci individuas substantias vocaverunt, quoniam ceteris subsunt et quibusdam quasi accidentibus subpositae subiectaeque sunt.

In this discussion we are not confronted with the notion of prime matter (*primordialis materia*), nor do we find it in the commentaries by Thierry of Chartres on Boethius's theological tractates, although we do come across the notion of *materia*, but without the addition of the attribute *primordialis*, in connection with *substantia a substando* in two treatises which are closely related to the "School of Thierry of Chartres", sc. in the so-called *Tractatus de Trinitate* and the *Commentarius Victorinus*.¹⁴ Therefore, it is striking that Helias, who talks about *hypostasis* three times, twice insists that 'substance' is used justly - *iure* is his term - to signify the *materia primordialis*, since the prime matter underlies all forms and is therefore called, correctly in his view, substance from 'substare'.¹⁵ It is not Helias's intention, however, to argue that the substantive verb signifies primarily substance in the meaning of prime matter. This appears from his discussions of the substance signification of the pronoun and the substantive verb, for he equates the substance signification of the pronoun and that of the substantive verb, albeit that the substantive verb signifies substance as a verb that means "*ut de altero dicitur*". About the pronoun Helias says in the *Summa*:

[*Summa*, ed. Reilly, p. 625, 72-75] ... et hoc est quare antiqui pronomen dicebant meram substantiam significare, non quod informem et ab omni qualitate exutam significet - hoc enim esset primordiale materiam significare - sed quia rem ut substat et sine respectu forme significat.¹⁶

In the older version of his *Summa* on the *Priscianus minor* it is said explicitly that the substantive verb does not signify the primordial matter. It signifies substance in a way that is indifferent to any form:

[MS Paris, BnF, lat. 15121, f. 133^{va}] Nemo tamen putet me dixisse quod uerbum substantium significet substantiam ab omnibus exutam formis. Hoc enim esset primordiale materiam significare. Sed illud potius dico quod sig-

¹⁴ For these two texts, see the previous note. *Tractatus de Trinitate*, ed. Häring, p. 303, 5-6: Substantia ut a substando dicitur proprie est materia.; *Commentarius Victorinus*, ed. Häring, p. 525, 46-48: "Ubi dicitur a substando sic a Grecis dicitur *ypostasis*: a nobis uero substantia proprie. Et in hac acceptione conuenit materie que habet substare".

¹⁵ For the texts, see above, p. 241, and Helias, *Summa*, ed. Reilly, pp. 861, 25-862, 28: Substantia quandoque dicitur a 'substando', quod exigit ipsa derivatio quia 'substantia' a 'substas' derivatur et sic proprie dicitur de materia primordiali quicquid ipsa sit, que, ut ait Plato, substat omnibus formis tam substantialibus quam accidentalibus.

¹⁶ See also *Summa*, ed. Reilly, p. 917, 97-4. Clarembald of Arras, *DHeb.*, 7, ed. Häring, p. 192: Tribus enim modis res esse asseruntur, hoc est in divina mente, in materia, in existentia. Sed in divina mente sunt ut eas intellectibilitas comprehendit. In materia vero sunt ut a pronominibus significantur. In existentia quoque sunt ut sensibus qualitercumque innotescere queunt.

nificat substantiam sine respectu forme, scilicet indifferenter, ita scilicet quod non hanc uel illam substantiam nisi forte faciat hoc ex demonstratione.

So the substantive verb signifies substance ‘*a substando*’, not substance, however, as prime matter, but regardless of form, and it does so as a verb: “*ut de altero dicitur*”.

2.2 The Substantive Verb and Its Copulative Force

In his section on the properties of the parts of speech Helias argues that although substance and the *accidentia* are not the same and have a different status ontologically, nevertheless a substance and that which is in it, the *accidentia*, are actually one in reality. Our rational faculty is able, however, to discern and disjoin them so that it conceives of substance and *accidentia* separately. The noun ‘substance’ derived from *substare* was invented to signify substance as conceived by our rational faculty without any involvement of the *accidentia*. This implies that this word signifies substance conceived of as without any *accidens*, sc. as separated and divided from the *accidentia*:

[*Summa*, ed. Reilly, pp. 199, 10-200, 27] Primo ergo dicendum est quod cum sint decem prima rerum genera, scilicet, substantia et qualitas et huiusmodi cetera, omnia tamen idem actu sunt cum substantia. Socrates enim et albedo Socratis idem actu sunt. Non dico quod sint idem sed illud dico, quod idem sunt actu, quoniam quantum ad esse actu non differunt. Quid enim aliud est albedinem Socratis esse actu quam Socratem esse album? Substantia itaque unitiva est accidentium. Omnia namque accidentia in se recipit et copulat sibi et unit.

Quamvis vero substantia et omnia que in ea sunt idem sunt actu, ratio tamen discernit ea et disiungit, ut substantiam, scilicet, intelligat per se et [p. 200] accidentia per se. Repertum est itaque nomen ad significandum substantiam, eo, scilicet, modo quo a ratione perpenditur et ipsa ab accidentibus discernitur. Hoc autem est istud nomen ‘substantia’. Hoc enim nomen ‘substantia’ dicitur a ‘substando’. Res vero, ut informis est, sic est apta ‘substare’, hoc est, sic est apta formas recipere, ut iam formata est. Istud ergo nomen ‘substantia’ sic significat substantiam ut sine accidentibus intelligatur, hoc est, separando eam et discernendo ab accidentibus. Ideoque substantia genus generalissimum dicitur significare quoniam in generibus et speciebus semper habet aliqua discretio esse.

In the section on ‘*ens*’ of the chapter on the gerunds Helias insists that the substantive verb signifies ‘*substantia a substando*’. Substance taken in this meaning is unitive of other things to itself and other things with each other. This has a far-reaching consequence for the function of this verb in a proposition, since as a result of its particular meaning, its *res verbi*, its copulative function is not only to signify its *res verbi* and attribute it to the subject of the proposition as other verbs do, but to join substantial or accidental predicates to the subjected substance or to each other:

[*Summa*, ed. Reilly, p. 509, 55-62] 'Sum' ergo significat substantiam ut formis tam substantialibus quam accidentalibus substat. Ideoque sibi congrue etiam in prima et secunda persona copulat nomina que data sunt ex qualitate ut 'Sum Socrates' et similia. Itaque quoniam verbum substantivum significat substantiam ut unitiva est aliorum sibi et inter se, inde est quod ipsum copulativum est quorumlibet substantialium vel accidentalium cum substantia subiecta vel etiam inter se cum cetera verba se ipsa solummodo copulent cum subiectis et non alia ut 'Socrates legit' et consimilia.

The mutual uniting of the forms is based on the substance as underlying substrate. Helias adduces the example of a hair. A hair is long and black, so it unites the forms of long and black, i.e. *longitudo* and *nigredo* to itself, but since these forms meet each other in that hair, the substance of hair causes a mutual union of these forms, being itself the substrate:

[*Summa*, ed. Reilly, p. 922, 10-16] Substantia enim capilli unit sibi <et> inter se accidentia. Capillus enim longus est et crispus et niger, si ita contigerit. Unit ergo sibi capillus longitudinem, crispitudinem et nigredinem, ita quod hec eadem unit inter se. Crispitudo enim et longitudo et nigredo adeo unita sunt in capillo ut uno intuitu sensus ista confuse comprehendat non discernendo crispitudinem a longitudine vel longitudinem a nigredine.

So the copulative force of the substantive verb is based on its substance signification:

[*Summa*, ed. Reilly, p. 201, 43-46] Et quoniam substantia est unitiva omnium aliarum rerum - accidentia namque unit sibi et copulat - inde est quod 'sum es' copulativum est, eo, scilicet, quod substantiam, que sibi unit cetera et copulat, significet.

A similar observation is made in the *Summa* on book XVII:

[*Summa*, ed. Reilly, pp. 923, 58-924, 60] Et quia hoc vocabulum 'esse' significat substantiam ut sibi unit formas, inde est quod potest formas copulare rei subiecte, et ita verbum substantivum potest copulare aliud predicatum extra se rei subiecte.

Unlike the senses, reason is able to distinguish between the several compositional aspects of one individual entity in the outer world with regard to their respective states of being (*status*). For the senses grasp all the aspects together in one sensate activity and give a combining and mingling view (*confuse*) of the entity as one object. Reason, on the other hand, is a superior power of comprehension and cognition¹⁷ and is able to discern among these aspects:

[*Summa*, ed. Reilly, p. 922, 10-22] Hoc etiam apparet in minima substantiarum, scilicet, in capillo. Substantia enim capilli unit sibi <et> inter se accidentia. Capillus enim longus est et crispus et niger, si ita contigerit. Unit ergo sibi capillus longitudinem, crispitudinem et nigredinem, ita quod hec eadem unit inter se. Crispitudo enim et longitudo et nigredo adeo unita sunt in capillo

¹⁷ Cf. Boeth., *De cons.*, V, Prose 4, § 25-37, ed. L. Bieler, pp. 96, 66-97, 106.

ut uno intuitu sensus ista confuse comprehendat non discernendo crispitudinem a longitudine vel longitudinem a nigredine. Visus enim non discernit statum a statu, sed omnia simul quasi unum comprehendit. Unde bonus sensus confundit res; ratio vero que superior est superveniens statum a statu discernit. Ratio enim discretiva est statuum ut cum sensus confuse comprehendat illa tria in substantia capilli superveniens ratio discernit statum a statu. Deprehendit enim aliud esse in capillo quod est longus, aliud quod est crispus, aliud quod est niger. Aliud est etiam ei esse capillum.

As a consequence, words have been invented which correspond to the mental entities which are the result of the discerning operation of reason. A thing (a *res*) is called a 'substance' because it underlies both substantial and accidental forms: the state of being of a substance and the state of being of its forms is completely different, so a form is not a substance nor is it indicated with the noun 'substance'. The noun 'quality' also makes a distinction between states of being. For quality makes something a *quale*, but the state of being of a "*quale*-something" and of quality are different:

[*Summa*, ed. Reilly, p. 922, 23-31] Sunt ergo quedam vocabula secundum rationem data que discernunt statum a statu sicut ratio discretiva est statuum, ut hoc nomen 'substantia' statum a statu discernit. Substantia enim a 'substando' dicitur eo quod substat formis tam substantialibus quam accidentalibus. Et alius status est quo substat res formis; ex alio statu dicuntur esse forme vel accidentia. Similiter hoc nomen 'qualitas' statum a statu discernit quia qualitas est quod facit quale, et alius status est qualitatis, alius eius quod est quale; ita quoque est de aliis nominibus generalissimorum. Sic ergo quedam vocabula secuntur rationem discernendo statum a statu.

A special word has been invented, sc. '*ens*', to signify, unlike '*substantia*', substance *with* the connotation of "standing under forms", but without determining under which form or forms. This word does not discern the several compositional aspects with regard to their states of being. It signifies a substance as standing under forms, but without defining under which forms the thing denoted by the term 'substance' stands. So the thing in the outside world denoted by '*substantia*' and '*ens*' is the same, but the way in which this thing has been conceived and has been brought into the universe of discourse is different:

[*Summa*, ed. Reilly, p. 200, 28-41] Sed quoniam substantia sic unit sibi accidentia et recipit ut idem actu sint, repertum est etiam nomen quod significaret substantiam confuse, hoc est, non discernendo ab accidentibus sed ut substantia cum suis accidentibus unum actu est. Hoc autem nomen est '*ens*'. Substantia enim non sic est ut sine accidentibus intelligitur, immo sic est ut accidentibus informatur. Ideoque competenter ei attributum est hoc nomen '*ens*', secundum hoc quod accidentia recipit in se. Dicimus itaque quod '*ens*' significat illud idem quod '*substantia*' sed aliter, quoniam '*substantia*' significat discernendo, '*ens*' vero confuse, sicut dictum est. Unde quamvis '*ens*' nichil aliud significet quam '*substantia*', quia tamen ei datum est secundum hoc quod accidentia recipit in se, inde est quod hoc nomen '*ens*' transumitur ad nomi-

nanda accidentia, licet solam substantiam significet, velut cum dicitur 'Albedo est ens'. Si enim vere inspicias, substantia sola est proprie, accidens vero inest.

In his comments on the chapter on the article of Priscian's book XVII, Helias insists on the "*confuse*"¹⁸ way of signifying of '*ens*'. He also refers to the correspondence in particular meaning (*significatio specialis*) and to the difference in general meaning (*significatio generalis*)¹⁹ between '*ens*' and the substantive verb explicitly.²⁰ Moreover, both words, '*ens*' and the substantive verb, signify substance, but his readers are warned not to accept 'substance' in this context as the universal 'substance', nor as an individual substance, i.e. Aristotle's *prima substantia*. Helias considers '*ens*' to be a noun; its verbal counterpart is the substantive verb. This means that its *res verbi* is, strictly speaking, not substance '*a substando*', but *ens*, "as said of something else" (*ut de altero dicitur*) or a "thing as bearer of forms" (*res ut substans formis*):

[*Summa*, ed. Reilly, pp. 922, 32-923, 43] Philosophi vero volentes significare rem non discernendo statum a statu, sed confuse, ut ipsa est unitiva formarum, reppererunt hoc vocabulum '*ens*' quod significat substantiam ut ipsa est unitiva aliorum sibi et inter se non [p. 923] discernendo statum unius rei a statu alterius. Volentes autem hoc significare ut de altero dicitur, reppererunt vocabulum in verbali terminatione quod idem significaret, scilicet, '*sum es est*'. '*Sum*' ergo significat substantiam ut ipsa est unitiva aliorum sibi et inter se, et ideo dicitur verbum substantivum. Sed non est dicendum quod significat hoc universale, substantiam, neque hanc vel istam substantiam, sed substantiam dicitur significare, id est, rem ut substantem formis, id est, designat rem ut sibi unit formas et inter se. Neque tamen significat universale vel singulare, sicut: "loquitur de '*homine*', nec tamen de universali nec de singulari."²¹

So it appears that for Helias the copulative force of the substantive verb is based on its substance signification as uniting substantial or accidental forms to it; this copulative force is combined with the general verbal function. The latter is not defined by Helias, as we have seen above,²² by means of the set of semantic notions of '*actio*' and '*passio*', which are the traditional grammatical key notions of the definition of the verb, but by means of the notion of "*ut de altero dicitur*", the logical notion of predication. On the level of grammar the combination of (1) the *significatio specialis* of the substantive verb, sc. substance as uniting substantial or accidental forms to it, and (2) the general predicative function attributed to every verb in logic, implies that the substantive verb is able to join correctly a noun and sometimes even a pronoun to a subject. For every noun has been imposed on account of a form, and is the representative of this form at the linguistic

¹⁸ For the interpretation of the term '*confuse*' in this context, see above, p. 245.

¹⁹ For the thirteenth-century terms *significatio specialis* and *significatio generalis* in this context, see above, p. 237.

²⁰ Cf. Rosier (1987), 310.

²¹ Here I have adapted Reilly's punctuation somewhat.

²² See above, p. 245.

level. We find this semantic aspect of a noun expressed in the general signification (*significatio generalis*) or, in Priscianic terminology,²³ in the *proprium* of the noun. Helias explains the copulative function of the substantive verb with the help of some examples. First, he appeals to a category of nouns which factually are the most difficult: the proper nouns. Their respective proper or private qualities have been classed by Boethius with fictitious nouns derived from the proper noun in question, as e.g. from Plato *platonitas*, and from Socrates *socratitas*.²⁴ Helias emphasises that even if we do not have a correct word for the *forma*, the *forma* of the predicate noun nevertheless plays an essential role in completing its copulative function by the substantive verb in a proposition, since this verb is only able to join a noun, which is a word given on account of a form (*datum ex forma*), to the subject:

[*Summa*, ed. Reilly, p. 924, 65-71] Ex hoc etiam apparet quomodo verbum substantivum possit copulare nomen et pronomen subiecto. Notum enim est quod omne nomen datum est ex forma, ut hoc nomen 'Tripho' datum est ex forma,²⁵ cuius nomen non habemus. Dicit enim Boetius quod forma Platonis ficto vocabulo potest appellari 'platonitas'. Cum ergo 'esse' substantiam significet ut unitiva est formarum sibi, ideo potest nomen quod ex forma datum est copulare subiecto, ut dicatur, 'Ego sum Tripho', 'Ego sum homo' et similia.

This implies that when the person speaking is Tripho, the meaning of the sentence "*ego sum Tripho*" is that the proper form of this man, who is called Tripho, expressed by the fictitious word '*triphonitas*' is joined to the subject, who is the speaking person and who is a substance, as we will see below, a *suppositum forme*;²⁶ the meaning of the proposition "*Socrates est homo*" is that the substantial form which is signified by the common noun '*homo*' and is expressed by the word '*humanitas*', i.e. the quality of '*homo*', is joined to the subject, a person called Socrates.

The discussion on the difference between the substantive verb and the vocative verb is also revealing in this respect. The emphasis laid on the isomorphy between metaphysics and linguistics by the medieval scholars becomes clear in a more real way than in the discussion on the proper quality and the proper noun, in which these "fictitious" names occur. First Helias

²³ Cf. Prisc., *Inst. gram.*, II, 18, ed. Hertz, I, p. 55, 6: *Proprium est nominis substantiam et qualitatem significare*. For Helias, in this formula 'quality' indicates the extralinguistic aspect, the *forma*, under which a thing, here represented by the term 'substance', has been brought into the discussion or rather into the universe of discourse.

²⁴ See Boeth., *In Arist. De interpr.*, ed. sec., II, 7, rec. Meiser, p. 137, 6-7, and Petr. Hel., *Summa*, ed. Reilly, p. 191, 43-47: *Sed que significant substantiam ita eam significant quod qualitatem circa eam determinant vel communem, ut hoc nomen 'homo' rationalitatem et mortalitatem circa substantiam determinat, vel propriam ut hoc nomen 'Socrates' vel 'Plato', qualitatem cuius nominis ficto nomine appellat Boetius in commento 'platonitatem'.*

²⁵ The phrase "ut hoc nomen ... forma", which according to the app. crit. of Reilly's edition only occurs in *P* [= Paris, Arsenal 711], is necessary for a good understanding of the text.

²⁶ See below, p. 268.

shows the process underlying the copulative force of the substantive verb regarding the substantial forms and their linguistic counterparts:

[*Summa*, ed. Reilly, p. 925, 84-94] Cum ergo constet qualiter verbum substantivum tam nomen quam pronomen possit subiecto copulare, videndum est quare verbum vocativum copulet nomen, non autem pronomen. Ad quod intelligendum agendum est similiter de significatione vocativi.

Eadem fere est significatio verbi vocativi que substantivi. Substantia enim sicut est unitiva formarum similiter est etiam unitiva nominum sibi et aliis rebus. Nam omne nomen datum est ex forma, ut hoc nomen 'homo' datum est ab 'humanitate', que est forma substantialis. Similiter hoc nomen 'corpus' datum est a 'corporeitate', que similiter substantialis forma est. Cum ergo substantia uniat sibi has formas, unit etiam sibi nomina data ex formis. Cum formis enim trahit nomina.

The uniting function of the substance is not restricted to substantial forms. In the extralinguistic world a substance is also the bearer of accidental forms; this activity is expressed in the linguistic world with the help of the substantive verb and the adjectival noun invented to express the participated form in question, e.g. "*substantia est alba*". Peter Helias is aware of the difference between essential and accidental predication, but on the linguistic level it does not appear to make any difference: the linguistic phenomenon is based on the same ontological analysis of reality, sc. the distinction between substance '*ut est unitiva formarum*' and the *formae*. In order to be able to speak about the form as form, special nouns have been invented as e.g. '*albedo*', which, in the opinion of the grammarians, is a derivative from '*albus, -ba, -bum*'. '*Albus, -ba, -bum*', in its turn was invented for indicating substances:²⁷

[*Summa*, ed. Reilly, p. 925, 94-6] Quod etiam patet in formis accidentalibus quia substantia sibi unit albedinem et propter formam etiam sibi unitam unit etiam sibi nomen datum ex illa forma ut dicatur 'alba'. Ex quo patet quod substantia unit sibi nomina cum sit unitiva formarum. Unit etiam ipsa substantia nomina aliis rebus. Cum enim uniat sibi nomen datum ex hac forma 'albedine' necesse est etiam ut uniatur nomen ipsi forme per quod possumus agere de forma. Unde cum datum sit substantiis hoc nomen 'albus ba bum' ut homines haberent nomen quod designaret formam a qua datum est hoc nomen, reperiunt hoc nomen 'albedo', quod derivatum est ab hoc nomine 'albus'. Primo enim repertum est hoc nomen 'albus' quia primo imposita sunt nomina substantiis, deinde formis a quibus data erant. Sic ergo substantia unit nomina sibi et aliis rebus, quod inde contingit quia est unitiva formarum.

²⁷ Helias, *Summa*, ed. Reilly, p. 925, 1: cum datum sit substantiis hoc nomen 'albus ba bum'.

2.3 The Substantive Verb Used Figuratively

The noun '*ens*' was, as we have seen,²⁸ invented to signify substance as receiving forms in a combining and mingling way (*confuse*). These forms are not only substantial forms, but also accidental forms. So not only essential, but also accidental predication is involved. This has resulted in an enlargement of the range of applicability of the noun '*ens*'. It is no longer only said of substances, but also of *accidentia*, i.e. it is also said of an *accidens* as subject, e.g. "*albedo est ens*". Helias calls this use of '*ens*' figurative. This implies that the sentence "whiteness is a being" is figurative. He points to the fact that only a substance 'is', whereas an *accidens* "is in ..." (*inest*) or is "is in addition ..." (*adest*). In this way he maintains the isomorphy between linguistics and metaphysics:

[*Summa*, ed. Reilly, pp. 200, 36-201, 42] Unde quamvis '*ens*' nichil aliud significet quam '*substantia*', quia tamen ei datum est secundum hoc quod *accidentia* recipit in se, inde est quod hoc nomen '*ens*' transumitur ad nominanda *accidentia*, licet solam substantiam significet, velut cum dicitur '*Albedo est ens*'. Si enim vere inspicias, substantia sola est proprie, *accidens* vero *inest*. [p. 201] Dicimus ergo quod '*sum es*' significat substantiam, sed ut de altero dicitur, scilicet, cum tempore et in verbali terminatione.²⁹

Substance cannot exist without forms, nor forms without substance, to which they are joined. These forms are discernible, and Helias calls them *res*³⁰, just like the blackness and the length joined to a hair:

[*Summa*, ed. Reilly, p. 508, 26-37] Primo ergo videndum est quod cum sint decem rerum genera: substantia, quantitas, qualitas, etc., videndum, inquam, est quod substantia unitiva est *omnium aliarum rerum* [italics are mine] et sibi et inter se, sicut quod capillo unita est nigredo, longitudo, etc., et, si ita contingerit, crispitudo. Substantia itaque capilli his omnibus subiecta est et sibi et inter se hec omnia adeo unit quod visus hec omnia simul confuse et quasi unum comprehendit, statum nigredinis non discernendo a statu longitudinis vel crispitudinis nec aliquod etiam istorum discernendo a statu capilli, unde et hec omnia unita sunt in eo quod est videri. Ut unum enim a visu comprehenduntur. Unde dicuntur unum visibile, non quia sint unum, sed quia unita sunt, ut dictum est, in videri. Hec tamen omnia discernit inter se ratio quoniam potestas animi est et coniuncta disiungere et disiuncta coniungere.

The effect of the figurative or transumptive use of *ens* is not that it signifies equivocally or is an equivocal term, i.e. the result of an other and new *impositio*, but that it is said or predicated in an equivocal way of substance and *accidentia*. The figurative use was made possible since *ens*, although it only signifies substance 'so there has been one imposition only', nevertheless signifies substance as uniting forms, *certae res* or *certa*, to itself, and by consequence also denotes (*nominat*) these *certae res*. Helias makes use of

²⁸ See above, p. 247.

²⁹ See also above, p. 241.

³⁰ See also above, p. 249.

the distinction between *significare* (to signify) and *nominare* (to denote)³¹ to make clear the difference between “signifying equivocally” and “being predicated (or said) equivocally”:³²

[*Summa*, ed. Reilly, p. 508, 43-509, 55] Substantia vero nec sine formis esse potest nec forme sine substantia cui sunt unite. Quoniam ergo substantia aliter non existit nisi ut certas res sibi et inter se unit, idcirco ‘ens’ merito dicitur significare substantiam ut aliarum rerum unitativa est et sibi et inter se. Accidentia enim non proprie dicuntur esse sed inesse. Hoc ergo vocabulum ‘ens’ ratione significationis de accidente non dicitur sed transumptive solummodo ratione nominationis. Quoniam enim substantia dicitur proprie [p. 509] ‘ens’ secundum quod certa unit, inde est quod ea que illi uniuntur nominat. Nichil tamen substantie et accidenti commune significat, unde equivoce dicitur de illis dici quoniam substantie convenit per significationem, accidenti transumptive, ut dictum est, et solummodo per nominationem. Itaque ‘sum’ verbum substantivum hoc idem significat quod ‘ens’ sed ut dicitur de altero et hoc unum interest. ‘Sum’ ergo significat substantiam ut formis tam substantialibus quam accidentalibus substat.

Helias finds support for his view in two sayings he attributed to Aristotle. In the first one, transmitted through the work of Chalcidius, it is argued that one cannot say of an *accidens* that it is or that it is not, but only that it is in or that it is added to substances.³³ In the other quotation, which actually is not from Aristotle, but from Alexander of Aphrodisias and mentioned in Boethius’s second commentary on the *De interpretatione*,³⁴ it is said that

³¹ For the distinction between ‘*significare/significatio*’ and ‘*nominare/nominatio*’, see de Rijk (1967I), 185, 227-228.

³² It is noteworthy that this distinction between ‘*significare equivoce*’ and ‘*predicari equivoce*’ is not made by Peter of Spain in his *Tractatus*; see Peter of Spain, *Tractatus, Tractatus II: De predicabilibus, De predicatione*, ed. de Rijk, p. 25, 8-26, where Peter of Spain refers to the equivocal predication of ‘*ens*’. For a summary of Thomas Aquinas’ analogical predication of ‘being’ of substance and of accidents, see Wippel 1993, pp. 91-93.

³³ Chalcidius, *In Tim. Platonis CCCXXV*, ed. Waszink, p. 320, 4-6: “Quoniam est essentia, est etiam qualitas, et haec diversa sunt, nam essentia quidem alicuius rei substantia est, qualitas autem rebus substantiam habentibus contingit ac provenit”. The same quotation, in a similar wording, is found in the so-called *Abbreviatio Monacensis*, a work which is said to belong to the intellectual surroundings of Thierry of Chartres; *Abbreviatio Monacensis, DHeb. V, 54*, ed. Häring 1971, p. 414, 9-10: Unde Chalcidius *super Platonem* dicit quod accidentia non sunt sed habent esse iuxta id quod est i.e. per substantiam. ; cf. Clarembald of Arras, *DHeb.*, 21, ed. Häring 1965, p. 202.

³⁴ See Boeth., *In Arist. De interpr.*, ed. sec., rec. Meiser 1880, p. 77, 3-7, who argues that Alexander says that ‘est’ or ‘ens’ are equivocal words: Alexander quidem dicit est vel ens aequivocum esse. Omnia enim praedicamenta, quae nullo communi genere subduntur, aequivoca sunt et de omnibus esse praedicatur. Substantia est enim et qualitas est et quantitas et cetera. In his glosses on *De interpr.* of his “*Inredientibus*” Abaelard also refers to the equivocal predication of the substantive verb mentioned by Alexander of Aphrodisias (ed. Geyer 1927, p. 347, 23-29): Volumus itaque verbum substantivum in eadem significatione retentum, scilicet qua omnia significat in essentia, et substantivum esse et verbum ei idem semper notari ipso, veluti cum dicitur: “homo est” et “albedo est” eundem ubique sensum ‘est’ verbum tenet. <Quod autem> Alexander] dicit ens aequivoce praedicari, ita accipiendum est, quod ens non habet rationem cum qua ens in substantia conveniat, sicut et album dicit de primis substantiis aequivoce dici. Sicut ergo album de primis substantiis aequivoce dici Alexander vult, non quod diversa notet, sed <quod> rationem substantiae non habet, id est definitionem unam, cum qua

'ens' is said of everything, but in an equivocal way, since it is only said in a proper way of substances, and in an improper way of the *accidentia*. We have to bear in mind, however, that this does not imply that it signifies everything equivocally. Helias repeats the point he made in his *Summa in maiorem*:³⁵ he distinguishes between "*dici equivoce de omnibus*" and "*significare omnia ut equivocum*".

[*Summa*, ed. Reilly, p. 923, 44-57] Quoniam ergo hoc vocabulum impositum est ad designandum substantiam ut ipsa est unitiva aliorum sibi et inter se, ideo esse non dicitur proprie nisi de substantia, si proprietatem locutionis attendamus. Non enim proprie dicuntur accidentia esse sed magis inesse vel adesse. Si enim proprie loquor, non dicam, 'Albedo est', sed 'Albedo inest'. Unde Calcidius, 'Aristotelicum dogma est quod accidens non est sed est iuxta id quod est', appellans id quod est substantiam ut unit sibi alia et inter se; id est, accidentia non proprie sunt sed insunt vel adsunt substantiis. Quoniam tamen hoc vocabulum 'esse' significat substantiam ut sibi unit accidentia, ideo etiam improprie et translativae de accidentibus dicitur, unde possumus dicere quod albedo est color et similia. Unde dicit Aristotilis quod 'ens' equivoce dicitur de omnibus, non quod omnia habeat significare ut equivocum, sed quia cum proprie dicatur de substantiis improprie etiam et translativae dicitur de eis quae sibi unit substantiae, id est, de qualitate et quantitate et ceteris.

In Helias's older version we find a similar view, but with a special reference to the substantive verb. Moreover, Helias denounces the view, held by many, that this verb would signify everything in an equivocal way as false and deceiving. It is noteworthy that in this section the statement about the equivocal use of 'ens' or 'esse' has not been attributed to "Aristotle":

[MS Paris, BnF, lat. 15121, f. 133^{rb}] De quo pariter est uidendum, cur substantia et uocatiua solummodo sint copulatiua aliorum a se cum subiectis, cum cetera uerba nil copulant nisi se ipsa. Cum enim dicimus 'Socrates est homo', uerbum substantium copulat esse hominem Socrati. Cum dicitur 'Socrates legit', hoc uerbum solummodo copulat se ipsum subiecto, et sic in ceteris huiusmodi uerbis.

Primo ergo uidendum est quod substantia unitiua <est> aliorum sibi et inter se. Substantia namque ut dicitur a substando, sibi formas unit et substantiales et accidentales. Eodem modo illas inter se habet etiam unire, ut substantia corporeitate formata et sibi unit corporeitatem et pariter cum ea colorem adeo ut corpus et color corpori sint uniti et dicantur unum et idem uisibile, non quod sint una res et illa sit uisibilis, sed idem sunt quantum ad uideri. Videre enim corpus est uidere colorem unitum corpori et econuerso uidere colorem est uidere corpus coloratum adeo colorem et corporeitatem unit sibi et inter se substantia.

Hoc idem etiam in capillo patet in quo quidem [est] longitudo et nigredo, si ita contingerit, et crispitudo sibi pariter unita sunt, idest coniuncta, ut uisus illa omnia indifferenter comprehendat in ipsa capilli substantia. Patet itaque quod a substando et [ut MS] a subsistendo dicitur, omnium aliarum rerum et

illud in substantia conveniat, ita etiam ens, cum idem semper dicat, de praedicamentis aequivoce dicitur.

³⁵ See above, p. 251.

sibi et inter se unitiua. Vnde de sola substantia proprie dicitur *est*, de ceteris enim magis proprie dicitur *inest*. Si enim proprie loquimur, albedinem dicemus non esse, sed inesse. Vnde Calcidius: Aristotilicum dogma est quod accidens non est, sed est iuxta hoc quod est, quod equipollenter potest dici *est* uel *adest*. Bene autem de substantia dicitur esse ut formarum sibi unitiua. Substantia enim sine forma esse non potest.

Quamuis interdum substantia proprie dicitur esse, quoniam [f. 133^{va}] dicitur secundum quod formarum tam substantialium quam accidentalium sibi et inter se unitiua, de ipsa dicitur 'insit', ut ad cetera quorum unitiua est, transferatur ut transumptiue et improprie dicatur "qualitas est"; similiter quantitas et unumquodque aliorum. Ideoque equiuoce dicitur ad omnia se habere non quod omnia equiuoce significet, ut plerique menciuntur, sed quia nil ponit in eis congrue, cum de sola substantia proprie dicatur, de ceteris uero, ut dictum est, improprie.

From a comparison of this text of the older version with the more recent one we learn that Helias corrected or rather refined his view. In the older version he argues that in the sentence "Socrates is a man" the substantive verb "unites being man to Socrates". In the later version the substantive verb is said to unite another predicate which is not part of the substantive verb to the subject, sc. man to Socrates:

[*Summa*, ed. Reilly, p. 920, 80-83] Nullum aliud verbum potest aliud subiecto extra se copulare, ut cum dico 'Socrates legit', hoc verbum 'legit' copulat se ipsum subiecto, ita quod non aliud predicatum extra se. Sed cum dico, 'Socrates est homo', ibi verbum substantivum copulat aliud predicatum extra se, scilicet, hominem Socrati.

As we have seen above,³⁶ a substance also has the force to unite several forms, even accidental ones, to each other. Helias explains the function of the substantive verb in sentences in which one form is said of another as in "whiteness is a colour" by pointing to this uniting force of substance. The problem is, however, that when dealing with substance as mutually uniting forms Helias always brings a substance into the discussion, e.g. a hair which is the uniting factor between *longitudo* and *nigredo*; but neither whiteness nor colour is a substance. Helias does not pay further attention to this difficulty, but in all probability he also considered the use of the substantive verb in this kind of sentence figurative:

[*Summa*, ed. Reilly, p. 924, 62-64] Quia iterum hoc verbum significat substantiam ut unitiva est formarum inter se, inde est quod formam forme potest unire ut dicatur, 'Albedo est color', 'Color est qualitas' et consimilia.

2.4 Some General Remarks about Helias and the Substantive Verb

It is not easy to sketch a uniform picture of Helias's theory of the substance signification of the substantive verb. His commentary on the *Priscianus*

³⁶ See above, p. 249.

minor was of an earlier date than his work on the *maior*. We find partial or complete repetitions of views, cross references, and fragmentary discussions. In fact, a complete and final discussion of the substantive verb is lacking; on the other hand Helias was occupied with this subject intensively, and we come across remarks scattered all over his work.

It turns out that in Helias's discussions on the substantive verb three fundamentally different notions of substance are involved.

First, there is the Aristotelian substance notion of the *Categories* in the opposition between substance and the other nine categories, called by Helias the *accidentia*. The substantive verb cannot be said of a member of the nine other categories unless it is used figuratively. Since we find occurrences of the substantive verb as said of *accidentia* in certain sentences this implies, Helias argues, that the substantive verb is said equivocally.

Second, we are confronted with the notion 'substance *a substando*'. For Helias it stems, directly or indirectly, from Boethius's theological treatises. 'Substance' in this context always indicates a thing which is the bearer of substantial forms and which supplies to other things, i.e. *accidentia*, a substrate which enables them to be.³⁷ Although a substance only occurs with its substantial and accidental forms, 'substance *a substando*' represents the bearer or the substrate of the *accidentia* as considered without the *accidentia*. The substantive verb derives its name from this substance meaning.

Third, Helias uses the notion '*ens*'. Like 'substance *a substando*', it indicates the bearer of forms, but as bearing the forms, without, however, determining any form: it signifies a substance as the bearer of forms, but in a combining and mingling way (*confuse*).

According to Helias substance in the meaning of *ens*, i.e. substance as the bearer of forms, but in a combining and mingling way (*confuse*, or *indifferenter*, as it is called in the older version), is the *res verbi* of the substantive verb. As a result of this, we may argue that like the pronoun the substantive verb has a meagre substance signification, that is, it signifies substance in its most neutral way: open to every form. Moreover, it can be said of every substance, even of an accident, albeit in an improper way. Helias urgently needed this substance interpretation for the substantive verb, for only a verb that signifies substance in this meaning can function as a real copulative verb: it does not signify something other than substance "open to every form".

So we see that the copulative function of the substantive verb is based on two aspects. On the one side we are confronted with the merely verbal aspect of its functioning as predicate, for, like every verb, it signifies its *res verbi*, *ut de altero dicitur*. By introducing the logical requirement of "in-

³⁷ Cf. Boeth., *CEut.*, III, 46-49, ed. Stewart/Rand/Tester, Cambridge, Mass. 1973, p. 88.

strument of predication", Helias is able to avoid the grammarians' problem of the *actio* or *passio* signification of the substantive verb. On the other hand the substantive verb has its own *res verbi*, but unlike the other verbs, the vocative verb excepted, the substantive verb signifies its *res verbi* "as unitive with something else", sc. "substance as unitive".

This implies that for Helias the substantive verb has a univocal meaning, but it can be used in a proper and in an improper way. On the other hand, as we have seen above, it is said to hold itself in an equivocal way to everything, not because it signifies everything in an equivocal way, but because it is only properly said of substance, and improperly or transumptively of the *accidentia*, and therefore said both of substance and of *accidentia*.

Finally, it must be noted that Helias does not refer to the use of the substantive verb as autonomous predicate in a sentence. He avoids speaking about such propositions as "*Deus est*" or "*Socrates est*" in the meaning of "God exists" or "Socrates exists". He even rejects the existential interpretation of '*sum*' as '*inter res permaneo*'.³⁸

3. Gilbert de la Porrée

3.1 Gilbert de la Porrée and his Theory of Nominal Signification

As we have seen above, in the older version of his *Summa* Helias fulminated against "*plerique*" who held the view that the substantive verb signifies equivocally.³⁹ In one other place in the *Summa* he speaks dispraisingly again about people he refers to with "*plerique*". In the section on the characteristics of the noun (the *proprium nominis*) Helias comprehensively delineates the view of grammarians who say that '*substantia*' of the Priscianic description of the noun, viz. "*proprium est nominis significare substantiam et qualitatem*", corresponds with '*res quecumque ut substans, id est, ut suscipiens formam*' and '*qualitas*' with '*forma que rem ipsam facit esse*'. This distinction between '*substantia*' and '*qualitas*' corresponds, Helias argues, to the (Boethian) distinction between '*id quod est*' and '*id quo est*'. According to Helias this view was held by "*plerique*":

[*Summa*, ed. Reilly, p. 190, 14-25] Cum vero dicunt quod omne nomen significat substantiam et qualitatem, sic intelligunt quod omne nomen, scilicet, significat substantiam, hoc est, rem quamcumque ut substantem, id est, ut susipientem formam et preter hoc qualitatem, id est formam que rem ipsam facit

³⁸ Helias, *Summa*, ed. Reilly, pp. 197, 77-198, 82: Dicunt itaque quidam quod '*sum*' significat ex prima sua inventione quandam absolutam actionem que est huius modi: '*Sum*', id est, '*Inter res permaneo*'. Significat itaque secundum istos actionem talem, scilicet, inter res permanentiam, sed inde translatus est ad substantiam significandam. Itaque naturaliter, id est, ex prima sua inventione significat actionem sed ex translatione substantiam.

³⁹ See above, p. 253.

esse, ut 'homo' hoc nomen significat rem que est homo pro substantia et humanitatem pro forma. Hoc nomen rursus 'albedo' significat rem pro substantia que est albedo et facere album, sive 'albedinitatem', ut fingam vocabulum, pro forma. Et hoc idem de ceteris nominibus dicunt.

Hoc autem est illud quod plerique dicunt, scilicet, quod omne nomen significat id quod est et id quo est; 'homo' hoc nomen significat id quod est, id est, rem que est homo, et id quo est, id est, humanitatem qua est homo, quoniam homo ab humanitate est homo.

Factually, this particular theory of nominal signification was held by Gilbert de la Porrée and his followers, the *Porretani*.⁴⁰ As is well known, Gilbert taught that in every natural body two ontic constituents can be discerned. The first is the thing itself, the *subsistens*, called by de Rijk the "self-contained entity"; it corresponds to and is derived by Gilbert from the Boethian *id quod est*, 'that which is'. The other constituent is the Boethian *id quo est*, 'that by which "*id quod est*" is' or 'that by which "*id quod est*" is what it is': an immanent form or a set of immanent forms.⁴¹ Gilbert found this dichotomy between *id quod est* and *id quo est* in every entity.⁴² Stimulated by Priscian's description of the significative properties of the noun Gilbert developed a theory of nominal signification which corresponds to his ontology. In his comments on Boethius's *Contra Eutychen*, IV, 43 sqq. he insists on the twofold significative function of the noun. Every noun signifies two different things (*diversa*):⁴³ a substance and a quality. For example, the noun 'homo' signifies "*id quod intelligitur homo*", to which the *substantia nominis* corresponds, and "*id quo esse debet homo*", to which the *qualitas nominis* corresponds. But Gilbert states that although a noun does not lose these two significative components, only one of them is factually operative in a proposition, depending on the function of the noun in that proposition, whereas the other component is reduced semantically. He illustrates this by means of two sentences, sc. "*homo est risibilis*" and "*homo est individuorum forma*". The propositional content, Gilbert argues, of the first sentence—'*proponitur*' is the term which he uses—is that "*is qui ea (sc. humanitate) est homo*" is able to laugh, whereas the meaning of the other sentence is not that "*is qui est homo*", but "*id quo est homo*" is said to be the form of individuals:

[*CEut.*, IV, 44-45, ed. Häring, p. 296, 34-45] Uerbi gratia si quis dicat "homo est risibilis" item "homo est individuorum forma", "hominis" nomen quicquid in una id in altera affirmatione significat i.e. et id, quod intelligitur homo, et id quo esse debet homo. Quorum significatorum illud quod primum exposuimus

⁴⁰ Cf. Reilly (1975), 654.

⁴¹ For a detailed discussion of Gilbert's ontology, see van Elswijk (1966), 153-203, and de Rijk (1988c).

⁴² For the figurative language in the statements about God, see Nielsen (1982), 158-163 and Jacobi (1995), 525.

⁴³ Ed. Häring, p. 297: Omne uero nomen diuersa significat, substantiam uidelicet et qualitatem.

gramatici uocant "substantiam". Illud uero quod secundo exposuimus, cuiuscumque generis sit, in omni facultate "qualitatem" appellant.

Sed in prima affirmatione non id quo est homo - i.e. nominis qualitas - sed is qui ea est homo - i.e. nominis substantia - risibilis esse proponitur. In secunda uero affirmatione non is qui est homo sed id quo est homo - i.e. nominis qualitas - indiuiduorum forma dicitur.

Gilbert does not consider this use of a noun in a proposition to signify its quality improper or figurative:

[*CEut.*, IV, 46-47, ed. Häring, pp. 296, 46-297, 56] Similiter si quis dicat "animal est sensibile", "animal est genus hominum" item "sensibile est corpus", "sensibile est differentia" item "risibile est homo", "risibile est proprium hominis" item "album est corporeum", "album est accidens" quamuis eisdem nominibus rerum suppositio in propositis enuntiationibus fiat, priores tamen de substantiis nominum, secunde uero de qualitatibus eorundem intelligende sunt.

Et huiusmodi infinite sunt orationes que sub eisdem nominibus non modo equiuocis aut quolibet scematis genere translatis uerum [p. 297] etiam uniuocis de aliis atque aliis debere intelligi, ipsa rerum proprietas et orandi regula prudentem docet interpretem.

The later Porretani insisted on the improper use of speech in those cases where a noun was used to signify the nominal quality in subject term position:⁴⁴

[*Dialogus*, ed. Häring, p. 254]⁴⁵ Attende quod nomen quandoque significat id cui impositum est, et hoc proprie, ut 'homo est animal'; quandoque id ex quo impositum est, et hoc improprie, ut de eo fiat sermo ut 'homo est species', 'homo est assumptus a Verbo', i.e. humanitas.

It is not only on nominal signification that the opinions of Peter Helias and Gilbert de la Porrée were fundamentally different in the domain of semantics. As we will see⁴⁶ their views on the signification of the substantive verb diverge completely.

3.2 Gilbert and the Porretani on 'Being' and 'Being-a-something'

In his comment on the second *theorem* of Boethius's *De hebdomadibus*, in which it is stated "that 'being' and 'the thing that is' are different",⁴⁷ Gilbert first draws our attention to the several interpretations given to the expressions 'being' and 'being-a-something' in various disciplinary domains,⁴⁸ sc. theology and natural philosophy.⁴⁹

⁴⁴ See Rosier (1987), 315.

⁴⁵ For the *Dialogus*, see Häring 1953.

⁴⁶ Cf. below, p. 272.

⁴⁷ Boeth., *De hebdom.*, II, ed. Stewart et al., p. 40, 28-30: Diversum est esse et id quod est; ipsum enim esse nondum est, at vero quod est accepta essendi forma est atque consistit.

⁴⁸ For the term '*facultas*' in Gilbert's theory of disciplines, see Haas (1987), 290-291.

⁴⁹ Cf. Nielsen (1976), 59, de Rijk (1988c), 88-89 and Jacobi (1995).

[*DHeb.*, I, 27-28, ed. Häring, p. 193, 51-65] Hic commemorum uidetur quod diuersorum philosophorum in diuersis facultatibus usu diuerso “esse” et “esse aliquid” multipliciter dicuntur.

The theologians, or rather the philosophers when they occupy themselves with theology, argue that the divine essence, which we predicate of God, when we say “God is”, is said of the being of all creatures. For when we say “a man is”, the theologians conceive that this man’s being is said, to be in an extrinsic denomination, derived from the essence of its Principle. Moreover, they do not say that a man *is* by humanity, but is *an aliquid*, a something, by humanity.

[*DHeb.*, I, 27-28, ed. Häring, p. 193, 54-65] Nam in theologica, diuina essentia - quam de Deo predicamus cum dicimus “Deus est” - omnium creatorum dicitur esse. Cum enim dicimus “corpus est” uel “homo est” uel huiusmodi, theologi hoc esse dictum intelligunt quadam extrinseca denominatione ab essentia sui principii.⁵⁰

Non enim dicunt corporalitate corpus esse sed esse aliquid: nec humanitate hominem esse sed esse aliquid. Et similiter unumquodque subsistens essentia sui principii predicant non esse aliquid sed esse: illa uero, que in ipso creata est, subsistentia non esse sed esse aliquid.

Et ad eundem modum: quicquid operante summo principio est, eadem principali et increata essentia dicunt esse, suo uero quolibet genere aliquid esse.

On the level of natural philosophy the situation is different. Some philosophers held the view that the subjects of their reflections get their “being-a-something” from the same cause as that from which they get their “being” (“*esse*”). It is very important for a good understanding of the discussion to bear in mind that in this context Gilbert is speaking about the *naturalia*, the *concreta*, and that his opposition between “being” and “being-a-something” must be interpreted in light of the view which Gilbert attributes to the other group of—natural—philosophers he discusses in the next section who make a distinction between the causes of ‘*esse*’ and ‘*esse aliquid*’.

The philosophers first mentioned do not make a distinction between the *subsistentia* as the source of being and the *accidentia*, especially quantity and quality as the source of “being-a-something”. Gilbert emphasises that in their opinion the substantive verb ‘is’ is predicated equivocally of all things:

[*DHeb.*, I, 29, ed. Häring, p. 193, 66-70] Illorum uero philosophorum, quibus sue facultatis genera sunt sola illa que ex principio esse ceperunt, alii quelibet illa orationum suarum themata i.e. materias, de quibus loquuntur, eodem quo dicunt esse dicunt etiam esse aliquid. Unde etiam hoc uerbum “est” dicunt de omnibus equiuoce predicari.

Factually, the latter part of this view, sc. that the substantive verb was said equivocally of everything, was defended by Helias in his comment on the

⁵⁰ Robert of Melun furiously rejects Gilbert’s view in his *Sententie*, I, 5, ed. Martin-Gallet, p. 269, 12.

Priscianus minor.⁵¹ We must bear in mind, however, that the text about the equivocal predication of the substantive *verb* is only found in the older version of Helias's *Summa*. In the more recent version it is '*ens*' and not '*esse*' which is said to be predicated equivocally. of everything.⁵²

It is of paramount importance for our investigations to identify these philosophers. It appears that Thierry of Chartres and other Chartrian scholars who are closely connected to his "School" held this view. In his comments on Boethius's *De Trinitate* IV, Thierry argues that when a *substantia*, a *qualitas*, or a *quantitas* is predicated, that which is being predicated informs the subject and is actually one and the same with the subject:

[*DTrin.*, IV, 30, ed. Häring, pp. 103, 89-104, 95] SED HEC PREDICAMENTA et cetera.

PREDICAMENTA inquit substantie, qualitatis etiam et quantitatis, sunt huiusmodi ut id quod predicatur idem sit actu cum eo quod subicitur. Socrates namque et magnitudo Socratis idem actuale sunt. Idem enim actu sunt. [p. 104]

Et hoc est: UT IN QUO SUNT IPSUM ESSE FACIANT QUOD DICITUR i.e. ut quod predicatur idem actu sit cum eo quod subicitur ut predictum est.

and:

[*DTrin.*, IV, 49, ed. Häring, p. 108, 51-53] Et hec est sententie summa quod si predicatur substantia uel qualitas uel quantitas tunc id quod predicatur subiectum informat et est unum et idem actu cum eo quod subicitur.

When a *substantia*, a *qualitas*, or a *quantitas* is predicated, then one intends to show by its predication that the *res*, i.e. the *res subiecta* "a something", is:

[*DTrin.*, IV, 32, ed. Häring, p. 104, 6-8] Uere, predicabilia illa que ad predicamentum substantie uel qualitatis uel quantitatis pertinent talia sunt ut ipsum in quo sunt faciant esse quod dicitur.

and:

[*DTrin.*, IV, 50, ed. Häring, p. 109, 64-65] Cum substantia inquit qualitas uel quantitas predicantur tunc res ipsa eorum predicatione aliquid esse ostenditur.

This implies that Thierry and his partisans do not attribute a fundamentally different role to substance, quality or quantity respectively in conferring "being-a-something" to a subject. Neither do they reserve the conferring of "being" to substance on the one hand, and the conferring of "a something" to quality and quantity on the other.

Clarembald of Arras⁵³, a pupil of Thierry, gives a clear summary of Thierry's position. The three predicaments, substance, quantity and quality, attribute "being-a-something, either a *substantiale* or an *accidentale*" to their subjects, and the subjects are "a something" through the very predicates. This role was not granted to the other seven *predicamenta*:

⁵¹ See above, p. 253.

⁵² See above, p. 252.

⁵³ For this scholar, see Häring (1965).

[*DTrin.*, 83-84, ed. Häring, p. 173] Tria praedicamenta i.e. substantiae, quantitatis et qualitatis in unum collegit. Docuitque taliter ea praedicari quod suis subiectis aliquid esse vel substantiale vel accidentale attribuant ipsaque subiecta ipsis praedicatis sint aliquid. Quod a septem praedicamentis sequentibus omnibus modis removet atque per exemplorum inductionem, ut asserit, verum esse confirmat quoniam, cum quis dicit quempiam esse in foro ut hominem vel ubique ut Deum, praedicata ipsa ad praedicamentum quod est ubi spectare videntur. Nec tamen ea, quae subiciuntur praedicatis, aliquid esse intelligi queunt velud cum Enoc dicitur justus, iusticia iustus esse intelligitur.

Cumque aliquis quempiam dicit currere vel aliquid regere vel nunc esse vel semper esse, vel ad facere vel ad quando ipsa spectant praedicata. Nec tamen res subiectae rebus quae praedicantur aliquid sunt veluti, qui "magnus" dicitur, magnitudine magnus est. At tria praetaxata praedicamenta rem in qua sunt faciunt esse quod dicitur

Gilbert's own position as a natural philosopher is different.⁵⁴ He himself is a partisan of the group of philosophers who make a distinction between the causes of 'esse' and of 'esse aliquid', and say that the *subsistentia* get their being by the *subsistentiae*, which are the substantial forms, and their being-a-something by those (forms) which accompany the substantial forms, viz. the forms which fall under the *accidentia* of quantity and of quality. The other seven *accidentia* are considered to be of no importance in this respect:

[*DHeb.*, I, 30, ed. Häring, p. 194, 71-77] Alii uero diuidunt. Et ea que subsistunt [sc. the *subsistentia*] dicunt esse subsistentis et esse aliquid his que subsistentias comitantur: interuallaribus scilicet mensuris et qualitibus.

Ceteris uero septem generum predicamentis eadem subsistentia nec esse nec aliquid esse concedunt. Similiter et nullum illorum que abstractio mathematica ab his, de quibus predicantur, diuidit uel esse uel aliquid esse consentiunt.

Gilbert's approach to Boethius's *secunda regula* is based on a semantic-logical analysis of the problem behind this rule. It is focused on the different interpretations and on the different ways of predication of the term 'esse' in propositions, when used on the theological level or on the level of the philosophy which deals with the *res naturales*, the *concreta*. It appears that in Gilbert's theory the signification of the substantive verb is not to be looked for in 'substantia a substando' as we find in Helias's theory, but in 'substantia, or in Gilbertian terminology *subsistentia*, a *subsistendo*': "*esse subsistentia est, non substantia*".⁵⁵

We meet a similar approach in the *Sententie* by Peter of Poitiers, a follower of Gilbert de la Porrée.⁵⁶ He insists that we must bear in mind the different levels, sc. Creator and created world, and the corresponding usage of language when we speak about divine subjects or about the created world, the

⁵⁴ See de Rijk (1988c), 83, 90-91.

⁵⁵ *De Hebd.* I, 40, ed. Häring, p. 196, 24.

⁵⁶ For the author, see the introduction to the edition, pp. 2-13.

naturalia. In the proposition '*Deus est*' the verb '*est*' means the divine essence; in the proposition '*lapis est*' the verb '*est*' also means the divine essence, but by means of a denominative metaphor only. Its meaning is that the stone about which the verb '*est*' is said, has its being (*subsistere*) from the Agent who really is:

[*Sent.*, ed. Häring, p. 93] Sunt autem in theologia nomina rebus propria conuenientia diuinis que non minus tamen humanis immo omnibus naturalibus per denominationis translationem attribuuntur ut ens et bonum. Dicimus namque de deo "*est*". Quod utique de deo recte dicitur. Ipsius namque essentia significata est. Illius namque natura essentia est. ...

[*Sent.*, ed. Häring, p. 95] Quod si in naturalibus "*est*" uerbum fuerit sine nomine predicatum significat id, de quo predicari uidetur, ab auctore subsistere qui est.

In propositions about God in which the verb '*est*' is determined by a substantive, a quantitative or a qualitative noun, i.e. the nouns of the first three Aristotelian categories, we speak in fact about God's essence, since his magnitude and his essence are the same, his goodness and his essence are the same etc. This implies that it is the same to say "God is", "God is great" and "God is good". The situation is different in propositions in which the noun of a Divine Person's personal property determines the verb. In these propositions the verb signifies 'eternity' and the noun the personal property in question:

[*Sent.*, ed. Häring, p. 95] Est preterea notandum quod cum dicitur de Patre et Filio uel Spiritu "*est*" uel "*sunt*" uel singulis uel omnibus simul suppositis nec determinatur nomine uerbum, sola predicatur essentia eorum sicut cum predicatur idem uerbum nomine substantiuo uel qualitatio uel quantitatiuo determinatum. Idem enim dicitur cum dicitur est uel est deus uel bonus uel magnus. Non enim hiis suppositis personis uel earum aliqua cum "*est*" uerbum predicatur temporales motus in eo intelligendi sunt sed diuina natura. Idem etenim est diuinitas et essentia, bonitas et essentia, magnitudo et essentia. Cum uero dicimus: Pater est ingenitus, uel: Filius est genitus, uerbum significat eternitatem, nomen uero proprietatem.

In propositions about the *concreta*, the created world, we are confronted with a different situation. When the predicate consists of the substantive verb and a predicate noun, the substantive verb retains the signification the verb '*est*' had without the determining noun, i.e. it signifies that the thing of which it is said, has its being from the Agent who really is. But the determining word signifies in addition that the subject in question has something, for example *corporalitas*, by which it is something, in this case, *corpus*:

[*Sent.*, ed. Häring, p. 95] Si uero nomine fuerit determinatum, significat quidem rem de qua predicatur ab auctore subsistere qui est. Nomen uero significat aliquid haberi ab eodem subiecto. Velut cum dicitur: lapis est, "*est*" utique significat lapidem ab eo auctore subsistere qui est. Cum uero dicitur: lapis est corpus, uerbum significat lapidem ab auctore subsistere qui est. No-

men uero significat lapidem habere corporalitatem. Significat enim predicamentum temporali subiectum esse mutationi.

Peter summarises the signification of the verb ‘*esse*’ as follows:

[*Sent.*, ed. Häring, p. 95] “*Est*” igitur semper significat uel essentiam diuinam ut deus est et est deus uel eternitatem ut deus est pater uel sempiternitatem i. e. eternitatis cum tempore collationem ut deus est creator uel ab auctore qui est aliquid subsistere ut lapis est uel rem ab auctore subsistere qui est dum habetur aliquid ab ea ut lapis est corpus.

It must be stressed that Peter of Poitiers is speaking as a theologian and not as a natural philosopher. This implies that the natural philosophical part of the discussion, part of which we find in the writings of Gilbert, is not found in his *Sententie*.

3.3 Some Summarising Remarks on Gilbert de la Porrée’s and the Porretani’s Theory on “Being” and “Being-a-something”

Gilbert emphasises that speaking about the *naturalia*, the theologians or rather the philosophers *in diuinis* hold that the verb ‘*est*’ always signifies that that *naturale* has got its being from the divine essence. Gilbert’s natural philosophers have a different scope. They occupy themselves with the natural bodies as such. These consist of two ontic constituents: the *id quods* and the *id quos*, or in Gilbertian language the *subsistentia* and the *subsistentiae*. Transferred to the level of logic, it is Gilbert’s view that the *subsistentiae* and those qualities and quantities which accompany the *subsistentiae* can correctly be predicated of a *subsistens*, for example of a man:

[*CEut.*, IV, 23, ed. Häring, p. 292] omnes ille, quas modo diximus, subsistentie et qualitates et interuallares mesure immo etiam interuallarium termini de ipso homine recte dicuntur.

On the other hand, that which is, the *subsistens*, is never predicated: only ‘being’ and ‘what accompanies being’ can be predicated but of a *subsistens* (*id quod est*) only, unless of course we are speaking metaphorically:

[*CEut.*, IV, 28, ed. Häring, p. 293] Quamuis enim corpus et spiritus diuersi generis sint, in hoc tamen sunt eiusdem rationis quod utraque his, que predicantur, supposita sunt. Ipsa uero impossibile est predicari. Nunquam enim id, quod est, predicatur. Sed esse et quod illi adest predicabile est: et sine tropo non nisi de eo quod est.

The predicate term and the substantive verb taken together are the “instrument of predication”:

[*DTrin.*, II, 59, ed. Häring, p. 175, 11-14] Nam de quocumque aliquid predicatur, id predicato quidem est hoc quod nomine ab eodem sibi indito et uerbi substantiui compositione cuius amminiculo predicatur esse significatur.

In the *Sententie* of Peter of Poitiers we find a theory of theological semantics, in which it is argued that in a proposition which consists of a subject term referring to a *naturale*, the verb '*est*' and a predicate noun, the verb '*est*' always signifies that the *naturale* in question *is* and has its being from the Agent who really is.⁵⁷

This signification of '*esse*' is primarily an *id quo*- or a *subsistentia*-signification; it is incompatible with the substance signification, which we find in the *Summa* of Peter Helias. For in Helias's work the substantive verb signifies, as we have seen, *substantia* '*a substando*' and not '*a subsistendo*': "*Cum ego dico 'sum' habeo substantiam ut est unitiva alicuius forme sibi*" (*Summa*, ed. Reilly, p. 973, 86). Helias's theory is akin in many respects to the tenets held by Thierry of Chartres.

4. The Doctrine of the Substantive Verb in the Linguistic Theory of the Porretani

4.1 Semantic Aspects

Gilbert de la Porrée developed a particular theory of the nominal signification to support his ontological and theological tenets. Furthermore, his analysis of propositions in which the verb '*est*' occurs differed fundamentally from Peter Helias's and this difference was based on different ontological presuppositions. But Gilbert did not leave an elaborated theory of the signification of the substantive verb. Fortunately, some of his followers worked out a theory of the significative function of the substantive verb to support their metaphysics and to maintain, in this way, the isomorphy between their analysis of the world and the instrument with the help of which they spoke about the world, i.e. language.

On ff. 74^r-83^v of MS Oxford, Bodl., Canon misc. 281⁵⁸ some fragments of a Porretan gloss commentary on the *Piscianus minor* have been preserved. In two sections of this commentary the significative function of the substantive verb has been discussed comprehensively.

In his commentary on the construction of the substantive verb with a substantive noun in predicate position the anonymous glosser first makes some general remarks on verbal signification. Verbs have been invented to apposit (*apponere*) their substance (the *res verbi*) to their respective persons. Since it is only possible to apposit properties, and there are only three kinds of properties, there are only three kinds of verbs. The first kind of property consists of the *substantiae subiectorum*, i.e. the *genera*, the *species*, and the *differentiae* of the first Aristotelian category, viz. of substance, but he ex-

⁵⁷ For the text, see above, p. 261.

⁵⁸ For a concise description of this manuscript, see Fredborg/Kneepkens (1988), 11-13.

cepts the *primae substantiae*. Only one particular verb has this function, and therefore this verb has been called the substantive verb:

[*Glose Porretane*, ed. Fredborg/Kneepkens, pp. 62-63] Omne igitur uerbum, ut sepe diximus, repertum est propter apponendam suam substantiam sue persone. Sunt autem tria genera eorum, que apponuntur. Cum enim proprietates tantum possint apponi, earum alie sunt substantie subiectorum, ut genera, species, differentie; alie sunt proprie qualitates eorum, scilicet indiuidua; alie sunt accidentia. Vnde propter triplex genus appositorum inuenta sunt tria genera apponentium uerborum. Est enim inuentum hoc uerbum 'sum, es, est' propter apponendas substantias subiectorum. Vnde ex officio apponendi eas dictum est substantium.

The second kind are the *proprie qualitates*, the properties typical of the individuals; it is the task of the vocative verb to apposit them:

[*Glose Porretane*, ed. Fredborg/Kneepkens, pp. 62-63] Propter apponendum uero proprias qualitates inuenta sunt uerba uocatiua, scilicet 'uocor' et 'nominor' et similia. Que ex officio apponendi propria nomina quibus fit uocatio, dicta sunt uerba uocatiua.

Finally, there are the *accidentia* which are represented in this scheme by the *verba adiectiva*:

[*Glose Porretane*, ed. Fredborg/Kneepkens, pp. 62-63] Propter apponendum utcumque accidentia inuenta sunt cetera uerba, que ex officio apponendi accidentia dicuntur accidentalialia uerba uel adiectiua ...

The way in which the substantive verb signifies the substances of the subjects is noteworthy. It signifies all the substances of the subjects⁵⁹, but in an equivocal way. So it appears that one of the main tenets of the Porretans' theory on the signification of the substantive verb is that it signifies "in an equivocal way":

[*Glose Porretane*, ed. Fredborg/Kneepkens, p. 62] Est enim inuentum hoc uerbum 'sum, es, est' propter apponendas substantias subiectorum. Vnde ex officio apponendi eas dictum est substantium. Et est quidem repertum ut equiuoce significet quascumque substantias [personas *MS* & *ed.*] subiectorum.

The function of the predicate noun is to determine which of these substances, i.e. substance in the meaning of substantial form, the *ousiosis*, is intended to be apposit in the sentence at issue. For example, in the sentence "Socrates is a man" ("*Socrates est homo*") the predicate noun 'man' ('*homo*') determines which of its "significations" the substantive verb has to apposit in this sentence. This implies that the substantive verb contains all the substances (*ousioseis*) in its signification, but only one of them is actu-

⁵⁹ I have corrected the untenable reading of the MS '*personas substantiuorum*' into '*substantias subiectorum*'; in the edition '*substantiuorum*' had already been replaced with '*subiectorum*'.

ally joined to the subject of the sentence, sc. that which is indicated, signified by the predicate noun:

[*Glose Porretane*, ed. Fredborg/Kneepkens, p. 62] Quas cum propter equiuocationis confusionem sua significatione non distinguat, adiunguntur ei nomina significantia eas ad determinandum quam earum habeat apponere in qualibet locutione uelut cum dicitur 'Socrates est homo', adiunctione nominis determinatum est quam suarum significationum hic habeat uerbum apponere et sic in aliis.

Although the adjectival verbs have been invented to apposit the respective *accidentia*, we do not have a verb at our disposal for every *accidens*. That is why the substantive verb has been introduced and why we come across sentences in which the predicate noun does not signify a substance, but an *accidens*, as for instance in: "Socrates is white" ("*Socrates est albus*"). The difficulty which might be noticed here, sc. the substantive verb signifying an *accidens* and not a substance, is solved by adducing a metaphorical use of the substantive verb:⁶⁰

[*Glose Porretane*, ed. Fredborg/Kneepkens, p. 62] Propter apponendum utcumque accidentia inuenta sunt cetera uerba, que ex officio apponendi accidentia dicuntur accidentalia uerba uel adiectiua, ut 'legit', 'currit' et similia. Quia tamen sunt multa accidentia ad <que> significanda non sunt reperta uerba adiectiua sicut longitudo, crispitudo et similia, transumptum est uerbum substantium ad hoc apponendum, ut sicut proprie dicitur 'Socrates est homo', ita licet preter proprietatem 'Socrates est longus uel crispus'. Et inde etiam propter similitudinem transumptum est ad apponendum quelibet alia. In quo usu licet sit preter officium, tamen retinuit nomen quod habet ex officio, ut ubique dicatur substantium et substantiue construi ad nomen sequens.

It is clearly stated that the substantive verb is equivocal, for it signifies every "*substantialia*", i.e. every substantial property - these properties are represented by the *nomina substantialia* -; and it signifies every *substantialia* because of its primary invention, and all the *accidentia* in a figurative way. The way in which the substantive verb signifies these *substantialia* and *accidentia* is as a substance, i.e. as *ousiōseis* according to the Porretans. It contains the meanings of all the nouns in a combined and mingled way (*confuse*), and therefore it needs these nouns to remove this uncertainty when used in a proposition. The entities about which these properties are said, are the subjects of the sentences. The substantive verb receives its person signification from the words which represent them in the respective sentences:

[*Glose Porretane*, ed. Fredborg/Kneepkens, p. 22] Et quid est "uerbum esse substantium ad illud": in multiplici substantie uerbi et persone significatione

⁶⁰ One must bear in mind that for Petrus Helias this problem did not occur. In his theory the substantive verb signifies a substance "*a substando*" as uniting substantial and accidental forms. He is confronted with improper use when the substantive verb is said of a form as subject, e.g. "*albedo est*" (cf. above, p. 253).

qualitatem illius nominis et substantiam continere, ut hoc uerbum 'sum' equivoce significat quodcumque substantiale ex prima inuentione et omnia accidentia ex transportatione, mores et rationes et hec omnia ratione substantie. Has autem proprietates suscipientia significat idem uerbum pro ratione persone. Similiter omnes proprie qualitates sunt substantie huius uerbi uocatiui 'uocor'. Et quorum ille sunt, dicuntur illa persone eiusdem. Hec autem uerba, substantium et uocatum, substantia sunt ad omnia nomina ab illis proprietatibus indita rebus quarum sunt, et ea ad determinationem sue equiuocationis exigunt, quia significationes illorum nominum certas in se habent confusas.

Incidentally, it is important to stress that the equivocality which is at issue here, is not the equivocality which the '*plerique*', mentioned by the author of the late eleventh-century *Glosule* on Priscian,⁶¹ were dealing with. These philosophers accepted the substantive verb as signifying all the actions signified by all the verbs as far as they are being in their subjects:

[MS Cologne 201, ff. 31^{rb}-31^{va}] Diligenter tamen plerique singulorum inuentionem et proprietatem vocabulorum attendentes, cum ab actoribus 'est' substantivum uerbum vocari videant, nequaquam huius vocabuli quod est '*substantivum*', inuentionem ociosam esse arbitrantur. Constituentes igitur duplicem ipsius 'est' naturam, aliam ei ex hoc quod dicitur uerbum proprietatem, aliam ex hoc quod substantivum attributam esse <defendunt>. Ex hoc enim quod dicitur *verbum* actionem vel passionem in[f. 31^{va}]herentem ipsum quidem significare quis dubitet? Ex hoc autem quod est substantivum omnes res in essentia quidem, scilicet in hoc quod existunt, significare dicitur, secundum quam significationem maxime agitur ab auctoribus de '*est*', secundum aliam raro. Concedunt igitur '*est*' significare actionem non unam, sed omnes eas quae a uerbis omnibus actionem designantibus notantur, ut *lectionem*, *cursum*, et similia, in quantum insunt subiectis. Ex quo patet '*est*' non unum posse dici uerbum convenienter, sed multa.⁶²

A similar view to what we have found in the Porretan Priscian glosses has been defended by the author of the so-called *Dialogus Ratii et Everardi*, a Porretan treatise dating from the late twelfth century.⁶³ In this text, an instructive dialogue about the basic tenets of the Porretan doctrine, the substantive verb is also discussed. The anonymous author also adduces the three categories of the verb, and argues that the *res uerbi* of the substantive verb is the *essentia*, which it joins to something:

[*Dialogus*, ed. Häring, p. 253] Item verborum aliud adiectivum ut 'sedeo', aliud substantivum ut 'sum, existo', aliud uocativum ut 'voco'. Adiectivum adiectivam significat qualitatem ut 'albeo' quam copulat substantiae de qua est sermo ut 'Petrus docet'. Substantivum, quod significat essentiam quam copulat

⁶¹ For this work, see Hunt (1943) and de Rijk (1967I), 21, 101-102.

⁶² For this text see de Rijk (1967I), 102; a similar view is mentioned by Abaelard in the glosses on *De interpr.* of his *Logica "Ingredientibus"*, ed. Geyer 1927, p. 346, 13-17: Verbum etiam substantivum 'sum, es, est' dupliciter accipi dicunt. In vi quidem uerbi sumitur, cum aequivoce pro quibuslibet uerbis sumitur tam actionem quam passionem significantibus, ut hic tantundem ualet quantum amo uel lego uel curro uel amor uel legor etc.

⁶³ See Häring (1953).

ut 'sum' vel 'Paulus est homo'. Vocativum, quod vocationem, i.e., in generali propriam significat qualitatem quam copulat ut 'Paulus vocatur Paulus'.

The substantive verb signifies substance in an infinite way and needs, therefore, when it is used *personaliter*, a nominative to determine its indeterminateness (*confusio*). The nominative which it needs is the predicate noun:

[*Dialogus*, ed. Häring, p. 253] At cum substantivum verbum infinite significet substantiam, i.e., essentiam, cum personaliter ponitur, exigit nominativum ad determinandam confusionem suae significationis: nominativum, inquam, vel proprii nominis ut 'Paulus est Paulus' vel communis, et hoc vel substantivi ut 'Plato est homo' vel adjectivi ut 'Paulus est Apostolus'.

So we may conclude that a fundamental difference in ontological theories led Peter Helias on the one side and Gilbert de la Porrée and his partisans on the other to essentially different theories of the semantics of the substantive verb.

For Peter Helias, the substantive verb signifies a substance '*a substando*' as unitive of a form, be it a substantial or an accidental one, to itself. Owing to the fact that it can unite accidental forms too, its use has been extended, such that it can be said of *accidentia*. This use, not its meaning, was improper and figurative. So it was not that it signified equivocally, but that it was predicated equivocally. The predicate noun signified the form as united to the substance signified by the substantive verb. Gilbert emphasises that these philosophers argue that things 'are' by the same <cause> by which they are 'a something'.⁶⁴

For the Porretans the substantive verb signified the substance "*a subsistendo*", i.e. the *ousiosis*; it signified equivocally every *substantiale* from its primary invention; the predicate noun signified a form and was needed to determine the equivocal form signification of the substantive verb.

4.2 Semantics and Syntax

The difference between the two approaches also extended to the domain of grammar, and especially to the doctrine of the construction. As is well known, Peter Helias elaborated the doctrine of the transitivity of the respective constructions, and introduced the three levels on which one speaks of transitivity and intransitivity.⁶⁵ On the level of the sentence, the *oratio constructa*, the words are construed intransitively, if they refer to the same person, the same thing.⁶⁶ Helias accepted not only an intransitive construction between the subject term and the verb, but also between the substantive verb and the predicate noun. He solves the conflict which one could imagine

⁶⁴ Cf. de Rijk (1988), 89.

⁶⁵ Cf. Kneepkens (1990), 166-171.

⁶⁶ Petrus Helias, *Summa*, ed. Reilly, p. 898, 24-26: Intransitiva constructio est in qua non fit transitus de una persona in aliam, ut 'Priscianus legit' quia 'legit' et 'Priscianus' ad eandem pertinent personam nec ostenditur alia in aliam transire.

would arise from a double substance signification, sc. of the substantive verb and of the predicate noun, in an inconsistent way. He distinguishes between the sentences

(a) *sum Priscianus*

and

(b) *ego sum Priscianus*.

In (a) *sum* signifies the substance as uniting a form to itself; the form which is joined to the substance, is signified by the predicate noun, sc. the proper noun *Priscianus*, which like every noun has been invented on account of a form, in this case *priscianitas*. So the famous *geminatio substantiae*, which according to Priscian has to be avoided,⁶⁷ does not occur in this case. Priscian, and in his wake Helias, are of the opinion that the emphasis is on avoiding the duplication of mere substance signification. On the level of predication, however, the form is at stake, not the substance and the form. The substantive verb '*sum*' signifies the substance as uniting the forms to itself and therefore it needs the adjunction of a noun, a part of speech which was invented because of a form, for its perfection:

[*Summa*, ed. Reilly, p. 973, 80-88] Sine pronomine vero nullum nomen cum prima et secunda persona verbi construitur intransitive, excepto substantivo et vocativo verbo, quia cum utroque horum potest nomen per omnes personas intransitive construi ut 'Sum Priscianus', 'Vocor Priscianus', 'Es Priscianus', 'Vocaris Priscianus', ita quod non adiungitur ipsi proprio nomini aliquod pronomen quia inde est quia 'sum' significat substantiam ut est unitiva formarum sibi et inter se. Cum ergo dico 'sum' habeo substantiam ut est unitiva alicuius forme sibi. Ideoque necesse est ut adiungatur forma quam sibi unit, et ideo hoc verbum asciscit ad se proprium nomen quod est datum ex aliqua forma.

The analysis of sentence (b) is completely different. According to Helias, the subject term, the pronoun '*ego*', signifies the substrate of the form, the *suppositum forme*, whereas the predicate noun attributes the form which it signifies to the subject. In this case, Helias emphasises, the substantive verb, which, in the analysis of sentence (a) signifies a substance '*a substando*', is only the link of the predicate noun to the subject:

[*Summa*, ed. Reilly, p. 924, 94-99] Non tamen nego quin convenienter possit dici, 'Ego sum Priscianus', ut pronomen ponatur ex parte subiecti et proprium nomen ex parte predicati. Nam 'ego' significat suppositum forme que forma attribuitur ei per hoc proprium nomen 'Priscianus'. Ibi autem 'sum' non est nisi copula predicati ad subiectum.

This implies that Helias maintains the substance signification of the noun on the semantic-syntactical level; otherwise it would not have been possible for him to speak about an intransitive construction between the substantive

⁶⁷ Prisc., *Inst. gram.*, XVII, 78, ed. Hertz, Vol. II, p. 152, 12-14: unde 'ego sum' vel 'ego vocor' per se nemo dicit, cum duplicata substantiae demonstratio sine qualitate nihil perfectum significaret.

noun and the predicate noun. But he is also aware that, on the level of predication, the predicate noun is not used because of its substance signification, but because of its form signification. Attributing the substance '*a substando*' signification to the substantive verb would cause, in this case, the dangerous *geminatio substantiae*, since the subject pronoun already signifies substance '*a substando*': the *suppositum forme*.

Gilbert de la Porrée and his followers followed a completely different track. They accepted the consequences of their theories of the nominal signification and of the substance '*a subsistendo*' signification of the substantive verb. As we have seen above, they paid much attention to the distinction in the nominal signification between the substance, i.e. the thing brought into the discourse, and the quality, the form under which this thing was brought into the discourse. The way in which they elaborated this theory allowed them to bring to the fore one of these two significative components in accordance with the context.⁶⁸ In addition to the role which it played in their semantic-logical contextual approach, the Porretan theory of the twofold nominal signification was of paramount importance to their semantic-syntactical analysis of the sentences with a nominal predicate, for, in their opinion, the twofold meaning allows the noun to hold two different positions in such a sentence, sc. before and after the finite verb, with a different kind of construction for each position. This implies that unlike Helias, the Porretans did not accept an intransitive construction between the subject term and the finite verb *and* between the predicate noun and the finite verb, but between the subject term and the verb only. This position was based upon the argument that the nominal substance signification is responsible for its being used as subject term, since the subject term puts as a subject "that about which the discourse is", although it also signifies the quality under which that about which the discourse is, is brought into the discourse; its ideal position in the sentence is before the finite verb, and it supplies the verb with its person, so it is construed personally with the verb and the verb must consequently be in the same personal property as the subject term, sc. in the first, the second or the third person. On the other hand, because of its quality signification the predicate noun is put ideally after the finite verb. Not only its syntactic function is different from that of the subject term, but also its semantic function, for it is not its duty to determine the person of the verb, but to appropriate the substance, sc. '*substantia a subsistendo*', of the verb, which is hidden in the infinite meaning structure of the substantive verb as we have seen. The glosser admits that the noun has a twofold signification that it keeps,⁶⁹ but because of its syntactic position it only signifies its quality. Nevertheless, it retains its original nominal substance signification, on account of which it remains a noun of the third person. Since the

⁶⁸ For the notion of the contextual approach, see de Rijk (1967I), 113-117.

⁶⁹ I insert a '*non*' after '*nomen*', for otherwise the sentence does not make sense.

relationship between the finite verb and the predicate noun is based, however, on the quality signification of the predicate noun, which it primarily signifies when used in this position, they are not construed personally and therefore neither intransitively nor transitively, but '*substantive*' '*a subsistendo*' construction: intransitive—substantive construction, a kind of construction typical for Porretan grammatical theory:

[*Glose Porretane*, ed. Fredborg/Kneepkens, pp. 21-22] sciendum est nomen ex duplici significatione duplicem locum in ordine obtinere et in duplici loco duplicem rationem construendi. Ex significatione enim substantie ponitur ante uerbum et personaliter cum eo construitur reddendo ei [f. 73^v] personam; ex significatione qualitatis post uerbum ponitur et reddit persone uerbi qualitatem suam et substantiue uerbum cum illo construitur ... Hoc autem nomen 'homo' positum post uerbum non obtinet locum illum, ut determinet personam uerbi, sed ut approprietur substantia <m> uerbi, que infinitatis ratione occulta est. Non dico, ut quidam, nomen <non> illo loco significare substantiam que persona dicitur, sed concedo ibi positum non ut significet personas, sed qualitatem. Sicut enim habens locum ante uerbum significat qualitatem qua subicit id de quo est sermo, nec tamen ponitur ibi, ut significet qualitatem, significat similiter post uerbum personam et eandem quam et uerbum et nomen ante uerbum. Non tamen ex identitate persone cum [p. 22] illo construitur nec aliqua similitudo personalis inter illa obseruatur. Vnde etsi sit tertie persone, conuenienter construitur ibi cum uerbo prime aut secunde persone, ut tamen permaneat tertie.

In the *Dialogus* it is stressed that this distinction between an intransitive, a transitive and a substantive construction is of paramount importance to the analysis of theological language. It is not confined, however, to sentences with a nominal predicate or to the domain of theology. Sentences in which a (resultative) predicative adjunct occurs, are also at stake. According to the Porretans the noun which is the nominal constituent of the adjunct, does not have a denoting function. It is not used because of its substance signification, but because of its quality signification only. It turns out that the Porretans also accepted an ideal word order in these sentences. The finite verb is the border: if, in the ideal order, a noun (i.e. the main constituent of a nominal phrase) has its place before the finite verb (i.e. *a parte ante* in medieval grammatical terminology), then it has referential force: it denotes something; if the noun at issue has its ideal place after the finite verb (i.e. *ex parte post*), it does not have any referential force. As said above, this is not only part of the Porretans' biblical language theory, but also applies to their analysis of ordinary language sentences:⁷⁰

[*Dialogus*, ed. Häring, pp. 253-254] R.-Audi. Notandum igitur utilem esse hanc verborum distinctionem et vim, nam quaedam locutiones intelliguntur miraculose et vere, si attendatur ea distinctio ut si adiectivorum verborum at-

⁷⁰ For the importance of the word order in propositions with verbs expressing mental attitudes and cognitive acts in early 14th-century terminist logic, see de Rijk (1976), 94-95 and de Rijk (1981), 51.

tendatur substantiva constructio ut in verbo Isaiae est videre dicentis: Ecce virgo concipiet etc. Nam si personaliter hoc nomen 'virgo' construitur cum hoc verbo 'concupiet', vera quidem locutio sed non [p. 254] miraculosa. Nam et nunc infinitae virgines sunt concepturae et pariturae. Sed alidem nomen substantive construatur cum verbo, et hoc <231^{vb}> ex parte appositi, vera locutio est et miraculosa ut sit sensus: Ecce concipiet virgo et pariet virgo, i.e. pariens virgo. Item, Deus genuit Deum. Se Deum vel alium Deum? Neutrum est verum, si transitive intelligatur construi verbum cum obliquis his, scilicet se Deum vel alium Deum. At si cum hoc accusativo alium construatur transitive, cum hoc accusativo Deum substantive, vera est locutio, ut sit sensus: Deus alium, i.e., Filium, genuit Deum. Similiter in Genesi: Abraham tres vidit et unum adoravit, i.e., tres adoravit unum. In moralibus exemplariter est videre idem ut: 'Te monachum feci', hoc falsum. 'Te feci monachum,' hoc verum. Et 'hunc militem fecisti', falsum. 'Hunc fecisti militem,' hoc verum. In theologia multa et alia invenies tali consideratione indigentia.

5. Final Remarks

Petrus Helias and Gilbert de la Porrée adduce the Boethian threefold distinction of 'substance' in their semantics, and 'substance' became a key notion of their theory of the signification of the noun, of the pronoun and of the substantive verb. It has to be emphasised that we find this distinction already in the older version of Helias's *Summa super Priscianum minorem*. Moreover, we must bear in mind that the introduction of the doctrine of substance into grammar was not generally accepted. We find it in the so-called third version of William of Conches's Gloss commentary,⁷¹ but the author of the so-called *Glose 'Omnis traditio'*, a gloss commentary on Priscian which dates from the third quarter of the twelfth century,⁷² energetically rejects the use of these three terms in *grammaticis* as a sort of profanity.

Although the distinction they used was the same, the use itself and the framework within which it was used were different. Helias worked within a framework which was fundamentally based on the logico-ontological presuppositions of Aristotle's *Categories*; but as was usual for the period this work was read with the help of Boethius's Neoplatonic-flavoured commentary; moreover he also did not escape from the main tenets of Boethius's metaphysics as found in the latter's theological works. In all probability we must look for Helias's metaphysics in the "School" of Thierry of Chartres. More research still needs to be done in that field.

Gilbert de la Porrée had developed a deviant philosophy and theology which, while deeply rooted in the Neoplatonic positions of Boethius's theological treatises, went their own way. The Porretani elaborated a linguistic

⁷¹ Reilly (1975), 594; Rosier (1987), 312; cf. above, p. 242.

⁷² For this commentary, see Kneepkens (1987), 345-346.

theory which corresponded to and paralleled their philosophical and theological tenets.

The threefold substance distinction enabled Helias to develop a theory in which 'substance *a substando*' (= the Greek *hypostasis*) was a central notion. It is the basic meaning of the pronoun: signifying substance as the bearer of one or more forms, conceived of without respect to any form. Therefore, in a proposition, a pronoun usually requires the addition of a noun or a phrase which signifies a form or something like a form.

'Substance *a substando*' is also the basic meaning of the substantive verb, and of the noun derived from it, sc. *ens*. The latter signifies substance "as the bearer of one or more forms", but without respect to any particular form. The substantive verb signifies substance '*a substando*' as uniting one or more forms to it without respect to any particular form, but with the typical function of the verb, sc. as it, sc. substance '*a substando*', is said of the subject: *dicitur de altero*. That is why the substantive verb is properly said of substances and only figuratively of the other categories.

In the significative function of the noun we meet two significative components: (1) substance *a substando* (*hypostasis*) and (2) substance *a subsistendo* (*subsistentia* = *ousiosis*) joined like matter and form to make one *compositum*, the *ousia*, called by Helias the *essentia*. Moreover we must bear in mind that every noun has been invented because of a form.

It appears that for Helias the substantive verb used in a proposition always needs a noun or a phrase to complete its basic function, sc. uniting one or more forms to it. Nowhere does he speak about the existential force of the substantive verb, but focuses entirely on its copulative function.

The Porretani followed a completely different track. In their opinion a noun has two separate significative components, sc. *substantia* and *qualitas*, which correspond to the ontic components of an entity in the outer world, sc. the *id quod est* and the *id quo est*. Incidentally, signifying in this way is, in Helias's view, signifying two entirely different "things", and consequently Gilbert should have had to admit that every noun is equivocal.⁷³

The substantive verb does not signify substance '*a substando*' as its *res verbi*, but substance '*a subsistendo*': the *ousiosis* in a combining and min-

⁷³ Petrus Helias, *Summa*, ed. Reilly, p. 191, 39-51: Alii vero aliter sciunt de significatione vocabulorum. Dicunt enim quod nomina vel significant substantiam ut 'homo et huiusmodi alia, vel significant ea que insunt substantiis ut 'albedo' et similia, vel quedam animi figmenta ut 'hircocervus' et 'Chimera', vel significant modos loquendi de rebus ut 'omnis' et similia que dialectici vocant 'signa'. Sed que significant substantiam ita eam significant quod qualitatem circa eam determinant vel communem, ut hoc nomen 'homo' rationalitatem et mortalitatem circa substantiam determinat, vel propriam ut hoc nomen 'Socrates' vel 'Plato', qualitatem cuius nominis ficto nomine appellat Boetius in commento 'platonitatem'. Nec sequitur quod si nomina substantiarum significant substantiam et qualitatem illius quod idcirco duo significant vel quod sint equivoca. Illa vero que significant ea que insunt substantiis vel solam qualitatem significant ut 'albedo', vel solam quantitatem vel aliquid aliorum accidentium.

gling way. This means that it signifies all the *ousioseis*; consequently, the substantive verb is equivocal. But which *ousiosis* it actually signifies in the proposition is indicated by the predicate noun.

On the level of the semantics of the proposition this implies that the predicate noun signifies the form because of which this noun has been invented. The Porretani accepted the consequences of this view. Although in their opinion a noun always signifies substance and quality and a noun is always of the third person, they reduced the substance signification component of a noun used in predicate noun position, and denied the predicate having an actual *persona* signification in a proposition; moreover they rejected Priscian's proposal of the change of person in constructions of the predicate noun with the substantive verb of the first or second person.

This approach enabled the Porretani to make, ideally, a sharp incision in the word order of a sentence between the part before the verb and the part which begins with the verb: in the latter part factually no word has a personal signification. Therefore an intransitive construction, which is based on co-referentiality, is impossible between the substantive verb and the predicate noun or between the subject term and the predicate term. An ultimate consequence was that according to the Porretani the ideal position of the object term is before the finite verb. So in their linguistic theory the SOV order was the correct word order!⁷⁴

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⁷⁴ Thanks are due to Prof. H.A.G. Braakhuis for his critical remarks on a draft of this article, and to Mrs. drs. Elizabeth Wall for help with the translation.

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CHAPTER TEN

PETRUS THOMAE'S *DE DISTINCTIONE PREDICAMENTORUM* (WITH A WORKING EDITION) ¹

E.P. BOS

1. Introduction

Plato and Platonism have continually attracted L.M. de Rijk's attention. He is enchanted, I believe, by the constructive character of their philosophies, and by the part they attributed to the intellect. De Rijk's interest is especially in semantics, in the way the ancient and medieval philosophers themselves related thought and speech to reality.² For Plato this meant the problem of participation, in which logic and ontology are interwoven. Plato presented a problem to his pupils, of whom Aristotle was the most important. Aristotle solved it in his theory of the categories. His *Categories* are primarily a part of his logical treatises, the *Organon*, but he also discussed the categories, from a different point of view, in the *Physics* and the *Metaphysics*.

In this contribution I shall discuss the way the Scotist Petrus Thomae distinguished the categories from each other and try to place him in a historical perspective. This Peter was born around 1280 and died shortly after 1340. He was a follower of John Duns Scotus and perhaps a direct pupil. I add to this paper a working edition of his *De distinctione predicamentorum*. On the basis of the edition I hope to clarify some points in the pioneering work by G.G. Bridges, *Identity and Distinction in Petrus Thomae O.F.M.*³. Hoeres's short article on Peter's ontology does not aim at giving a fresh study of the texts; he explicitly follows Bridges's investigations and tries to appreciate their systematic import for other Scotist doctrines.⁴

I shall discuss the problem of the relation between thought (language) and reality and how Peter interpreted it. Peter may interest us, I believe, because he systematises and clarifies Scotus's somewhat scattered remarks on distinctions and the categories, and has some original views.⁵ Peter dis-

¹ I would like to thank A.P. Runia (Groningen) for his corrections of my English.

² De Rijk (1978) 92.

³ 1959.

⁴ Hoeres (1961) 374-379.

⁵ On the history of distinction in medieval philosophy, see Grajewski (1944).

cusses Aristotle's theory of the categories from a metaphysical point of view. He can be labelled a Platonist, if one takes this label in a broad sense.⁶

De Rijk once made a provisional transcription of the text of manuscript Cambridge, *University* 1231, used in this paper, and suggested the period in which it was written. I am grateful for his permission to use this transcription.

2. Aristotle's *Categories*. The problem of the nature of the *Categories*

First something on Aristotle's *Categories*. There are many problems about this work. For our purposes, the problem of the *status* of the categories is relevant. Are the members of the categories things which one should understand ontologically? Or are they concepts, or linguistic elements? Are they a combination of both, i.e. things as far as known, or concepts as referring to things?

In 1984 Klaus Oehler published a translation of and commentary on Aristotle's *Categories*. Oehler emphasises that in Aristotle's *Categories* the terms for subject (ὑποκείμενον) and predicate (κατηγορούμενον) have no exclusive reference to linguistic items, but relate at the same time and primarily to extra-linguistic realities, which are said by words or expressed by sentences.⁷ In a recent work, L.M. de Rijk has defined the categories as names (designations) and as *potential* elements for statement making.⁸ De Rijk's approach is logico-semantic, as he himself says, rather than ontological. His interpretation is different from that of Oehler. Though Oehler has included de Rijk's studies in his bibliography, he does not discuss them in his introduction.

Aristotle's *Categories* forms an important part of his logic and of the subsequent tradition. To gain a better understanding we should be aware, I think, that medievals started from a parallelism between thought and reality. There is no gap between the two that needs to be bridged. Thought, writing and speech approach reality from different points of view. Things are apprehended and expressed by terms. There is a subjective element, but due to the parallelism between thought and reality the thing conceived is also something in reality. In the *Categories*, the two elements of this relation can be approached from two sides, namely from the side of the thing, and from the side of thought. In Aristotle's *Metaphysics* another set of terms forms the context of discussion. The point of view here is reality, without language playing a determinate part in the context.

⁶ Blum (1989); Beierwaltes (1965) vii-xiv.

⁷ Oehler (1997) 101.

⁸ De Rijk (1988) 9.

In ancient and medieval writers it is impossible, I feel, to separate an epistemological from a semantic or ontological point of view, as is sometimes done in the literature. There is no idealism of the eighteenth century type, nor is there a realism without the mind or language playing their parts, as some conclude. Depending on the logician's view, one should write either substance or 'substance'. In the first case the part played by reality is expressed, in the second the part played by language. In medieval thought, logical, semantic, epistemological and metaphysical points of view were interwoven.⁹

2.1. *Some notes on the nature of the Categories in medieval authors*

As I said, medieval logicians hold different views on the nature of the categories. Boethius emphasises the part played by words. The impositions of nouns are the significations, Boethius says. 'Man' is the noun for the substance, which is a subject for accidents. The first positing of names is that by which man signifies what is subject to the intellect or the senses.¹⁰

We find a kind of balance, i.e. that 'substance' means a whole, to which view Albert the Great and Thomas Aquinas bear witness. Something is only said of some other thing when it is the whole of it, and the form of the whole—which names the whole of the thing—, and the being of it. This results in a predication of wholes by wholes.¹¹

In Ockham the part played by the intellect is important. The members of the categories are concepts or intentions, or the written and spoken counterparts. There is no real essence in things to which they correspond in the same degree (in univocal predication), or to which they correspond in different degrees (in equivocal predication). Ockham takes the level of thought seriously. Whether a noun is absolute or concrete, is founded precisely in the noun. Ockham reformulates several metaphysical terms into logical ones, for instance Boethius's use of 'to participate'. The participation of a subject is its being predicated.¹²

2.2. *The division of being over the Categories*

Being is divided over the categories. The question arises how it is split up. Especially in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries a number of philosophers undertake to explain this *division of being*. Thus they claim to prove that there are exactly ten in number, just as Aristotle says according to them. Two examples of this project are Albert the Great and Thomas Aquinas. In

⁹ De Rijk (1982) 161. Some remarks on the authenticity also in Patzig (1973) 60-76.

¹⁰ Boethius (1860).

¹¹ Grempfer (1956) 368-387; (1957), 34-51; 175-196. Albertus Magnus *Tractatus secundus libri Praed. De Subst.* (ed. Grempfer), p. 75. Grempfer gives text and introduction of the *Liber de praedicamentis*, but no doctrinal discussion.

¹² *Expos. in librum Praedic.* (ed. Gál), p. 145.

their own way, but in principle similarly, they present their divisions. After they have determined the nature of something, which is here the nature of the members of the categories, they proceed to determine the division, in a traditional medieval fashion.

For Albert, the main thing is that a *predicabile* is either a substance or an accident—these form the division *per opposita immediata*, according to *per se* and *non per se*. Here is a radical distinction, almost as if there are only two categories. *Ens per se* as *per se ens predicabile* is substance, which is the first genus of all, one principle of all others. *Ens non per se predicabile* or *subicibile* is necessarily an *accidens*, and *in alio ut in subiecto*, according to Aristotle: *secundum inesse*, and *secundum aliquem modum ad aliud*.

Next something about the way Thomas Aquinas divides being.¹³ According to Thomas Aquinas, too, categories were things—that is to say, things qua known.¹⁴ Thomas left us no commentary on the *Categories*, but he did reflect on the matter, especially in his *Commentary on Aristotle's Physics*,¹⁵ where he proves the number of ten. In his *Commentary (lectiones) on the Metaphysics*,¹⁶ he gives a somewhat shorter, and in a few respects different version. I shall not discuss the latter commentary here.¹⁷

In the first commentary, Thomas says that 'ens' is divided into ten categories, not in an unequivocal manner like a genus into species, but according to diverse ways of being. These ways of being, he continues, are proportionate to the ways of predicating. Thomas apparently takes 'ens' as analogous, though he does not use the term here. He continues: 'for by predicating something of something else, we say that the one is the other'. On the basis of three ways of predication, Thomas 'deduces' the ten categories.¹⁸

Starting from this proportionate relation between being and predication, Thomas goes on to say that 'the ten categories are arrived at in three ways'. *The first way* is when something is predicated of a subject which belongs to this subject's essence, as when I say 'Socrates is a man', or 'man is an animal in the possession of senses'. Thus we get the category *substance*.

The second way is predication of something which does not belong to the subject's essence, but still inheres in it, in any one of three kinds. *The first kind* of this second way is on the part of the subject, which gives us the category of *quantity*—for quantity properly follows matter. *The second kind* follows the form, which gives us the category of *quality*—and qualities in turn have their foundation in quantity, for instance color on a surface, and figure on lines or surfaces. According to the third kind the subject is related

¹³ Bos (1998) 183-195.

¹⁴ Thomas Aquinas (1931) (*Quaestio disputata de potentia*), q. 7, art. 9: 'to a category belongs only something existing outside the soul'.

¹⁵ Thomas Aquinas *In Metaphysicam expositio* (ed. Cathala, Spiazzi), n. 322.

¹⁶ Thomas Aquinas *In Physicam expositio* (ed. Maggiolo), nn. 890-892.

¹⁷ See for a discussion Bos-Van der Helm (1998).

¹⁸ The term 'deduction' is not used by Thomas; in fact, it probably is Kantian.

to something else; then we get the category of *relation*—for when I say ‘a man is a father’ nothing absolute is predicated of man, but something which is within him in relation to something outside of him. Thomas clearly has a real relation in mind here. So far Thomas’ discussion.

Duns Scotus, however, believes that such a proposition is impossible. In his commentary on the *Categories*, which is an early work, he investigates the opinions of those who try to infer the nature of the categories from the various *modi predicandi*, thus possibly criticising Albert and Thomas —be it justly or unjustly. In his opinion, the members of the categories refer to distinct ‘realities’ (‘realities’ in a Scotist sense).¹⁹ None of them can be reduced, either to each other, or to something else. All members possess a certain formal reality, although this is not merely identical with the being of an actual existing thing.²⁰ Scotus accepts the number of ten categories with reference to tradition,²¹ but he gives some negative arguments. He demonstrates that there are neither more categories (for instance *motus* as an eleventh category),²² nor less than ten (for instance *ens per se* and *ens in alio* alone). So he arrives at the number of ten in a negative way: there are no more, and no less.

Perhaps Scotus opined that his reasoning on the number of ten categories may look too formal, centering as it does on questions like what it means to be a genus, or to be formally distinct and so on, and maybe because the lack of some kind of ‘deduction’ may give the impression that the whole classification of categories is no more than a logical construction based on our way of thinking. Therefore, in question VI of his commentary on the *Metaphysics*, Scotus takes pains to prove that the categories are also distinguished *realiter* (in a Scotist sense). His aim is to refute the arguments according to which the nine accidental categories could *realiter* directly or indirectly be reduced to the category of substance. What we should precisely understand by a *res*, however (whether it is something substantial or something relative or whatever), we are not told. But we can be sure that it is something independent of the mind. In scholium II, it is remarked on our two metaphysical *quaestiones*:

The view that there is no essential distinction between the categories, but that they are distinguished according to the ways of predication, is criticised by many authors with regard to the second part. However, this seems to be the Philosopher’s opinion, viz. that the number of the categories is taken from the

¹⁹ See below, § III 3, the second distinction.

²⁰ Kobusch (1990) 79.

²¹ Just as his (supposed) disciple Francis of Meyronnes would. Cf. Bos (1997) 211–227.

²² Which is also suggested by Aristotle in one place of his work, where it is said that for each category there is a substrate, for instance for the *quale*, for the *quantum*, for the *when*, for the *where* and for the *motion*. See Aristotle, *Metaphysics* VII, iv, (1831–70), 1029b 25.

modes of predication. Now the Doctor is unclear in this respect. See his commentary on text 13 and see <Alexander of> Hales on the same text.²³

With reference to a number of passages further on in his commentary on the *Metaphysics*²⁴ as well as in his commentary on the *Sentences*,²⁵ according to the scholium, Scotus aims at a '*distinctio formalis*' here, rather than a '*distinctio rei a re*', also because Scotus himself seems to allow in Book VIII that one and the same thing may fall under diverse categories.²⁶

For the moment we should be careful not to jump to conclusions. Seeing that his commentary on the *Metaphysics* is taken to be a work from Scotus' middle period, it is to be doubted whether the ideas and terminology from his later period can be read into this commentary, especially as Duns himself does not explicitly invite us to do so.

3. *Petrus Thomae*

3. 1. *Life and works*

In this paper I shall discuss a Scotist interpretation, viz. by Peter Thomae. Little is known of the life of Peter Thomae. He was a Spaniard, born in Catalonia. He studied theology in Paris, but his main works are connected with his teaching in Barcelona.²⁷ It is uncertain whether Peter was a direct pupil of Duns Scotus. He followed him, but critically, though not as critically as Ockham, according to Bridges.²⁸ He wrote the *De distinctione predicamentorum* around 1320. A precise date cannot be given. How far his works were prior to those of that other follower of Scotus, Francis of Meyronnes, we do not know. Francis wrote his *Commentary on the Sentences* around 1321.

Bridges has composed a survey of Peter's works, which amounts to nine treatises:²⁹ 1. *A Commentary on the Sentences*; 2. *De esse intelligibili*; 3. *De ente*; 4. *Formalitates breves* (or: *de modis distinctionum*); 5. *Formalitates conflates* (= our *De distinctione predicamentorum*); 6. *Quodlibet*; 7. *De*

²³ Sententia ponens non distingui Praedicamenta essentialiter, sed per diversos predicandi modos, late impugnatur quoad secundam partem, quae tamen videtur esse Philosophi, nempe numerum Praedicamentorum sumi ex modis praedicandi, *sed obscure procedit Doctor*'. Vide eum hic exponentem textum 13 et Alensem in eundem textum 217a.

²⁴ Johannes Duns Scotus, *Quaestiones in Metaphysicam* VIII, q. 1, n. 6 (ed. Vivès).

²⁵ Johannes Duns Scotus, *Ordinatio* II, dist. 1, q. 5 (ed. Vatican City).

²⁶ The interesting scholium III runs: Satisfit argumentis positus num. 2 probantibus accidens esse compositum. Ad secundum admittit praedicamenta, ut videtur, non distingui realiter, quod problematica tenet 2. dist. 1, q. 5. ad 2. pro opin. de quo supra lib. 5, q. 6. Vide ibi scholium secundum (p. 487b).

²⁷ Bridges (1959) 1-2; Dumont (1988), 186-255, esp. p. 187. Here also other literature on Peter's life.

²⁸ Bridges (1959) 168

²⁹ Bridges (1959) 2-5; 177-180.

unitate minori; 8. *De divite Christiano*; 9. *Liber de originali Virginis conceptione*.³⁰

Tracts 4 and 5 are problematic. Tract 4, the *Formalitates breves*, also called *De modis distinctionum*, was written before tract 5. Basically the contents are the same, but according to Bridges there is evidence of polishing and embellishment.³¹ Tract 5 is the one studied here and is the only one of Peter's works that is available in a sixteenth-century edition.³² Of this text, usually called *De distinctione predicamentorum*, I have made a working edition. The other work, the *Formalitates breves*, is much longer. In the appendix, on Peter's works, Bridges gives a survey of the extant manuscripts of both treatises as undifferentiated, because he finds it impossible to separate the two.³³

3.2. *Peter's De distinctione predicamentorum*

3.2.1. The working edition

I have not attempted to make a critical edition in the strictest sense, with all the variant readings and based on a well developed stemma. Collation of only two manuscripts makes it immediately clear that the difference between them is very substantial and that a complete collation results in an apparatus that is overloaded and hardly intelligible. I give a specimen below.³⁴ The editors of Peter's *Quodlibet* had only two manuscripts to handle, and from the second manuscript they gave only the more important variants.³⁵ Within the framework of this study a critical edition in the strict sense would go beyond the limits of my investigations and move the attention from the philosophical discussion.³⁶

Peter's *De distinctione predicamentorum* was the only text available to scholars up to 1957, when parts of other works were published. For the working edition I have chosen one of the—probably—older manuscripts, viz. Cambridge, *University* 1231, ff. 240ra-241vb, which is a good manuscript (I gave it as siglum: C).³⁷ The manuscript dates to the 14th century, I

³⁰ On the relative chronology, see Bridges (1959) 12-13.

³¹ Bridges (1959) 11-12.

³² 1517, ff. 109v-111v.

³³ Bridges (1959) 177-179, gives a list of 29 manuscripts. I add the following manuscripts that contain Peter's *De distinctione predicamentorum*: 1. Cambridge, *University* 1231 (FS III, 23), ff. 240ra-241vb, 14th c. This manuscript is the basis of my working edition. 2. Munich, *Staatsbibliothek* 18530b, ff. 131v-134r; 3. Oxford, *Saville* 18, ff. 32v-36v; 4. Zaragoza, *La Seo* 1793, ff. 2r-9v (information thanks to A. d'Ors, Madrid); 5. Segovia, *Cabildo de la Catedral*, ultima 31, pars media, ff. 129-135r; Sevilla, *Bibl. Cap. Columbina* 7-3-13, ff. 133r (=143r)-135r (=145r) (breaks off). An incomplete list is in Mohan (1975), 277 ff.

³⁴ See the appendix I, below.

³⁵ Petrus Thomae (ed. Hooper, Buytaert), xiv.

³⁶ Cf. Kann (1994) 1-9

³⁷ *A Catalogue of the Manuscripts* (1857) 422.

think. The catalogue notes that it was written in the XVIth c., but there seems to be no basis for this assertion.³⁸ The only year the catalogue mentions is 1464, when it says that on ff. 111-129 the *Questiones ordinarie* by James of Ascoli can be found, who died, the catalogue says, in 1464. This certainly is wrong, for James died about 1350. In my view, the handwriting of our part of the manuscript dates from the fourteenth century, for which I also rely on L.M. de Rijk's notes in his personal file.³⁹

I collated the Cambridge manuscript with the early print, Venice 1517 (siglum: *inc.*). This edition has more mistakes, gives more examples than strictly necessary, and its style is sometimes sloppy. In this way the reader has access to an old manuscript, which once circulated, and which I have corrected. Correction by the incunable was in most cases sufficient to establish a logically correct text.⁴⁰

3 3. *The contents*

According to Peter 'predicamentum' ('category') can be taken in two ways, viz. logically and metaphysically. In the first sense, the term means a second intention. In the second sense, it means a first intention. It is then a substrate to a second intention, like a foundation to a relation. Already in his early *Commentary on Porphyry*, John Duns Scotus distinguishes between the two approaches.⁴¹

In our tract we do not obtain any further information. It is difficult to determine what exactly Peter has in mind. The conceptions of the *status* of first and second intentions vary considerably among philosophers, not only between nominalists and realists, but also among realists themselves, such as the Scotists.⁴² We find some support for this interpretation in Peter's *Quodlibet*, however. There one of the questions is whether the concepts of the ten categories are equally 'simpliciter simplices', i.e. irreducibly simple.⁴³ He makes a distinction. 'Predicamentum' as second intention unites the categories in the sense that each category can be called a category. In another sense it stands for that to which the second intention is attributed. Now, 'category' is subject, that is, it is a first intention, of which it can be said that it is a category. As first intention, it can be subdivided: a. the whole line of all items in a category; b. the most general term of a line of items (substance, quality etc.). There is a further subdivision. 1. the categories can be consid-

³⁸ Roth (1936).

³⁹ MS Oxford, *Magdalen College* 80 is used by Bridges as support to interpret the early edition. According to the catalogue it dates to the late XIVth century, but there seems to be no clue in the manuscript itself.

⁴⁰ References to texts that have not been edited so far but only exist in manuscript could not be given.

⁴¹ Qu. 2.

⁴² Normore (1980) 479-495, esp. 479-480.

⁴³ Petrus Thomae (ed. Hooper, Buytaert), part III, qu. 13, p. 187, l. 12 f.

ered as first parts of limited being, or 2. as parts of an incomplex that can be taught, or 3. as proper modes of predication. As parts of being (1), Peter says, the categories belong to the object of metaphysics; as parts of an incomplex that can be taught (2), they belong to logic; as proper modes of predication (3), they belong to the logician in the way he proceeds in the *Topics*.

Applying this analysis to the *De distinctione predicamentorum*, Peter apparently takes 'second intention' in the first principle sense of the *Quodlibet*. By 'first intention' he means the subject terms (substance, quality etc.), of which it is said that they are a category. Further down in our tract, we learn that a category in the metaphysical sense is distinguished on the basis of the nature of the thing ('ex natura rei'), i.e. before any operation of the intellect. According to Peter, 'category' is a first principle of being. He subscribes to Porphyry's remark that we should lay down, as Aristotle does in the *Categories*, that the ten primary genera are the primary principles of things.⁴⁴

We should realise that in his *Categories*, Aristotle indeed refers to linguistic elements, but that even there his aim is to discover truths about reality.⁴⁵ In his *Metaphysics*, Aristotle talks about the categories but within the context of reality. In this tract Petrus Thomae's point of view on the categories is that of a metaphysician. He interprets the different categories as principles of things. His conception is realist.

In the first part of the tract, he presents seven assumptions ('*propositiones*'), in which different kinds of distinctions are defined; in the second part of the tract he formulates six theses ('*conclusiones*'), which make clear how the *predicamenta* are distinguished, and how not.

Why is Peter interested in *distinguishing* between the categories, and not in 'deducing' them from being, as Albert the Great and Thomas Aquinas did? The answer lies in the sixth thesis, I think. There Peter says that a single concept of first intention corresponds to the categories, viz. 'being' ('ens'). As I have said above, Duns Scotus and Scotists advocate a *univocal* concept of being, which can equally be applied to all its members. Therefore, they were interested in explaining distinctions *behind* this unity. Their question is what the distinctions are *within* being. These distinctions are formed by the intrinsic modes of being, viz. infinity and finiteness, necessity and contingency etc. Within the finite realm, the categories find their place. Transcendental terms, such as 'being', 'one', 'true', can be found in *each* category, Albert and Thomas, however, uphold an *analogous* concept of being, in which a distinction between, for instance, God and creatures, and between primary and secondary created beings, are included in that analogous concept itself.

⁴⁴ *Isagoge Porphyrii* (transl. Boethii), 6.7-8 (= Aristoteles Latinus I, 6-7, *Categoriarum Supplementa*, p. 12¹⁻²).

⁴⁵ Ackrill (1963) 71.

The way 'being' is conceived corresponds to our understanding of God. God is a being, just like creatures, but the intrinsic modes (infinity, finiteness etc.) are different. The question arises about the nature of this distinction; the formal distinction plays a pivotal part. Speaking about God therefore gives specific difficulties. In thirteenth and fourteenth century theology a problem was whether the principle of contradiction could be applied to God. Given the trinity, how are 'God is one' and 'God is not one' true simultaneously? The Scotist Francis of Meyronnes starts his *Commentary on the Sentences* ⁴⁶ by asking whether the principle of contradiction can be formed in theology (qu. 1), and whether the *subject* of the principle of contradiction, viz. *being*, applies equally to God and creatures. As Scotist Francis has a *univocal* concept of being.

Peter applies the following distinctions to the categories: 1) rational distinction, 2) distinction in virtue of the nature of a thing ('ex natura rei'). The latter is subdivided into: 3) real distinction, 4) formal distinction, 5) essential distinction, 6) subjective distinction by themselves as wholes; 7) objective distinction by themselves as wholes.⁴⁷ It is important to realise that Peter meant other things by 'res' or 'essentia' etc. than one usually thinks on the basis of e.g. thirteenth-century texts. I shall discuss the nature of these distinctions and their application to the categories below.

In applying the distinctions to the categories, Peter uses some technical terms. For a proper appreciation of the tract one has to know their meaning.

1. 'Categorical' and 'transcendental' terms. The former are divided into the categories (substance, quality etc.), and divide being. The latter 'go through' ('transcendere') the categories: every substance is a being, every quality is a being etc.

2. 'Inclusion': it means two things, Peter says: 2.1. 'identical or essential inclusion' ('essential' in the sense of 'as regards its being', not 'as regards its quiddity' in a thirteenth century sense, as Bridges interprets it⁴⁸). In this sense, the divine being includes the divine attributes, and each divine attribute includes another; for created being, the soul includes the powers of the soul; they do not include each other. 2.2. 'Formal inclusion' is when one thing includes another in its definition, like the composite includes matter and form, and species includes genus and difference.

3. 'Abstraction': when something is picked out from reality leaving apart other aspects. Ultimate abstraction, Peter says, is when something is taken apart from anything else that is not included in its quiddity.⁴⁹

⁴⁶ Bridges (1959) 115.

⁴⁷ Note that in the incunable edition, essential distinction is itself subdivided into subjective and objective, which troubles Bridges, as we shall see below. Cf. Bridges (1959) 134. Should the phrase 'se totis' ('by themselves') just be translated by 'wholly'?

⁴⁸ Bridges (1959) 70, 76; Hoeres (1961) 374.

⁴⁹ On 'ultimate abstraction', see Honnefelder (1979) 141; 212-218.

4. 'Concern': what is 'abstracted' is also 'concerned' ('concernatio') with something. 'Abstractio' and 'concernatio' are counterparts to each other. Peter distinguishes five ways of this couple: 1. higher and lower, for instance animal and man; 2. nature and suppositum, for instance, humanity and Peter; 3. quiddity and quiddity, for instance animality and rationality; 4. accident and subject, for instance colour and wood; 5. relation and foundation, for instance sonship and son.

5. 'Predication' is divided into essential and accidental. Peter leaves accidental predication aside, and divides essential predication into 'identical' and 'formal'. 5.1) 'Identical predication' is a. when subject and predicate are essentially the same and identical; or b. when each of the terms is formally infinite, or in the case of transcendental terms without characterization (i.e. the convertible transcendentals, such as 'being' and 'one'. He calls the latter terms 'permissively infinite', which is an unusual term. 'Permissively infinite' is opposed to 'formally infinite', which applies to the divine).⁵⁰ 5.2) 'Formal predication' is when the predicate intrinsically belongs to the quiddity of the subject, for instance in 'man is an rational animal'.

Thus the categories are distinguished by Peter. In the first article of the tract, Peter enumerates and defines the different kinds of distinctions. In his second article, he applies them in six theses to the categories. Here I shall discuss the theses.

1. The categories are distinguished in virtue of the nature of the thing

The categories are *not* distinct in virtue of an act of comparative power ('potentia collativa'), such as the possible intellect, the will or the imagination. The categories are distinct in virtue of the nature of the *thing*. They are a 'thing' ('res') in a Scotist sense. It is not easy to define this sense. It becomes clearer when we have studied the other distinctions, applied by Peter to the categories. I note here that these 'things' can but need not exist. In this way, Peter subscribes to the words of Porphyry that the categories are the first principles of things. They are the subjective parts of real being, i.e. the parts that bear or can bear other things.

Accordingly, they are here the objects of a real science, namely metaphysics, not of logic. Bridges distinguishes here between the categories (substance, quality, quantity) as objects of physics on the one hand and of metaphysics on the other. However, this does not seem to be the point: the opposition is just between logic and metaphysics. From a metaphysical point of view, the categories are formally first intentions, according to Peter, because the intelligibility is in the thing. The intrinsic modes of a category are also distinct in the same way, for instance *being by itself* ('perseitas'), *being in* ('inesseitas'), and *being related* ('adalienitas'). Bridges does not discuss

⁵⁰ *Quodlibet* I, qu. 7, p. 126. Bridges (1959) 27, n. 37, does not give a definitive interpretation.

these Scotist neologisms. More importantly, he does not note that according to Peter the intelligibility is in the thing.

2. *The categories are formally distinct*

The categories are formally distinct if in ultimate abstraction one category does not include another quidditatively, or in its quidditative concept. To confirm the thesis Peter adds that those that can exist without the other are formally distinct, and the categories are such. If the categories are formally *identical*, they would be mixed up, which is contrary to Aristotle's intention, he says.

Someone objects that a rational distinction is sufficient for the categories to be the principles of things.⁵¹ *Peter* denies this, because then they would be diminished beings ('*entia diminuta*'). So we should assume a formal distinction between the categories. Bridges correctly calls it a formal distinction in a *wider* sense, which implies a distinction of realities. It is not a distinction in the *strict* sense, which is of formalities together with a real unity. In this sense the formalities have a real unity, as in the case of God in distinction to the Holy Persons, wisdom etc. The categories are also really distinct, as we shall see. In this subdivision of formal distinction Peter's theory is different from that of Scotus, Bridges says.⁵²

3. *The categories are really distinct*

Things are really distinct if each is formally *positive*, and one in ultimate abstraction cannot be predicated of the other, neither formally nor identically.⁵³ This distinction excludes negations and privations, Peter adds. A category is primarily something positive.

Categories cannot be predicated of each other in identical predication, because they are neither formally nor permissively infinite. They are not the same as God, nor can they be contracted to a formally infinite being, which is possible for a transcendental like 'being'. Nor can they be formally predicated of each other, for this necessarily requires an identity.⁵⁴

Categories are also really distinct, because there is a distinction between their 'realities' ('*realitates*'), Peter says. The ground of this distinction is that all categories are distinct in the sense that things ('*res*') are distinct from other things. Categories are distinct *as things* because they are distinct as 'beings' ('*entia*'). This is shown by the fourth thesis, viz. that the categories are 'essentially' distinct. 'Being' and 'thing' are convertible, which is traditional theory.

What does Peter mean by 'reality'? Bridges finds difficulty with his use of it here, for, he says, "Peter has defined reality not as a *res*, but as a *quid*

⁵¹ The subsequent discussion is not in Bridges (1959).

⁵² Bridges (1959) 115.

⁵³ Cf. proposition IV of the first article.

⁵⁴ Hardly discussed by Bridges (1959)

rei.”⁵⁵ Bridges explains that they can be characterised as essential, formal, real perfections of a thing.⁵⁶ However, it seems that Peter in our text uses ‘reality’ as, for instance, Francis of Meyronnes does in his *Tractatus Formalitatum*, where he says that “reality is an intrinsic mode, by means of which all things that are in something are made a thing”.⁵⁷ The intellect understands in a realised substance: 1) the quiddity, contracted by the ‘haecceity’ (‘thisness’), 2) the existence and 3) the reality. So, according to Francis, the reality is not identical to the quiddity, nor the existence. Peter probably has the same view and understands here by ‘reality’ the feature that makes something a thing.

4. *The categories are essentially distinct*

Peter understands by ‘essential distinction’ the distinction according to which something can exist without something else. So by ‘essence’ he does not mean quiddity in a thirteenth-century sense. Peter says that this kind of distinction is based on the difference between categories as ‘thing and thing’. This applies to absolute categories (substance, quality, quantity).

However, there is a problem about the category *relation*. Peter has decided to follow a new opinion (*opinio nova*), hold by a ‘very subtle doctor’ (‘doctor subtilissimus’). According to this opinion, relations (for instance fatherhood) are ‘essentially’ distinct from foundation (in this example: generation). In the Venice edition, the text has ‘subtle doctor’ (‘doctor subtilis’). Bridges notes that Peter cannot have Duns Scotus in mind.⁵⁸ Our text has ‘most subtle’ (subtilissimi) and this most probably does not refer to Duns, but to another author, whom I have not been able to identify so far.

To defend this new opinion, Peter gives four arguments. The foundation, to which the relation is related, can be either a efficient, or a final or a material, or a formal cause.⁵⁹ In the first two of these cases, the essential distinction is clear. These two causes are extrinsic causes, and God can always fulfil the role of efficient or final causes in virtue of his supernatural power.⁶⁰ Now, if the foundation were a material cause, we should take it as matter *in qua* (not *ex qua*), because in this sense the accident (here: the relation) can be separated from the matter in virtue of divine power. If the foundation were a formal cause, several problems would arise: 1. a relation would formally be something absolute (he means: a form); 2. relations would only be

⁵⁵ Bridges (1959) 92, 157.

⁵⁶ Hoeres (1961) 378.

⁵⁷ Franciscus de Mayronis, *Tractatus formalitatum*, Venetiis 1520, 264th (H): ‘sed realitas est quidam modus intrinsecus mediante quo realisantur omnia que sunt in aliquo’.

⁵⁸ Bridges (1959) 159.

⁵⁹ Bridges is not always clear on the point that the foundation of a relation is not the same as the subject of a relation. Medieval tradition calls the subject, for instance, father Peter, the foundation is generation, the relation is fatherhood.

⁶⁰ With regard to this passage, Bridges thinks it evident that the foundation is not an efficient nor a final cause. He fails to see that the argument is conditional.

accidentally subjective⁶¹ parts of being, 3. the formal cause would not be something simple, but a composite (viz. of foundation and relation); 4. a relation would be a relation in virtue of something absolute, which is a contradiction. So formal causality cannot be advanced as an explanation of the relation between foundation and relation.

Next he argues that God can be the term⁶² of each dependent relation, because He is independent of anything else, and He virtually contains the relation. The latter is an interesting remark for the interpretation of the status of the categories.⁶³ 'To contain virtually' is a Scotist phrase, which explains God's omnipotency. This does not imply pantheism, for God is not actually the created things. In this way, Scotists express their interpretation of ideas in the divine mind.

Next, matter can be without form, so relation without foundation. Finally, Peter says that nature and *suppositum* are more intimately related than relation and foundation. Now, as God can separate the first two, so He can do with the latter.⁶⁴ In Christ and in the possibility of the incarnation it is clear that God can separate the person (*suppositum*) from the nature (God). Recently, J. Decorte has concluded that, according to Duns Scotus, every relation must have a foundation.⁶⁵

5. *The categories are subjectively distinct by themselves as wholes*

'Subjective distinction' means: that which is really found in the one is not found in the other. So the categories are distinct things as individual bearers of all their properties and of all other things that are dependent on them. The categories are not mixed. There is an objection that transcendental terms such as 'being' are found in every category. Peter replies that every transcendental is contracted to the proper being of each category. Further, if one says that 'one and the same being' is found in all categories, 'one' is taken accidentally. In the same way, one and the same individual can belong to the category substance, in so far as he is a man, and to the category relation in so far as he has a son. Next, Peter argues that whatever is distinguished in number, gender and species is subjectively distinguished, and this is the case for the categories. In a third note, he says that all categories can exist actually, and are therefore subjectively distinct. There is no claim to existence.⁶⁶

6. *The categories are not objectively distinct by themselves as wholes*

'Objective' traditionally means that something is known to a cognitive faculty as such. There is no objective distinction if one concept of the first intention can be abstracted from something. This applies to the categories,

⁶¹ On 'subjective', see thesis V.

⁶² Latin: *terminare*. I do not understand why Bridges says 'to bring to an end'.

⁶³ Bridges (1959) 163.

⁶⁴ Note that in the text, 'significat' (to be found in the incunabula) should be replaced by 'quidificat', which emphasises the ontological side.

⁶⁵ Decorte (1997), 27-47, esp. 46.

⁶⁶ Honnefelder (1952) 203, n. 1.

because 'being' can be said of them all. There is one single quidditative concept, for of each category can be said that it is a being, in response to the question 'what is it?'. 'Being' is a 'real' concept. If the categories were objectively distinct, the term 'category' as second intention would be completely equivocal, and the unity of created being would be lost. Bridges is puzzled about this distinction, because it is a subdivision of the essential distinction.⁶⁷ 'Being' and 'good', and the thisness (the Scotist 'haecceitas') of Peter and the thisness of Paul are objectively distinct according to this definition. However, they are not essentially distinct, Bridges says, and he suggests that Peter and Paul have the same essence. One could suggest, that this might only be true if 'essence' is taken as quiddity, or in a thirteenth-century sense, but Peter apparently takes it as separate being. This clearly is in agreement with the criteria Peter enumerates.

There is no common first intention referring to individual 'thisnesses' as such, exactly because they are thisnesses and therefore unique. Further, what first intention could there be over 'being' and 'good'? They are absolutely simple concepts and as such cannot have any element in common. This distinction is the strongest of all. The categories do not underlie this strongest distinction. They have a first intention above them, namely the univocal concept of 'being'.

4. Conclusion

From a metaphysical point of view, categories (man, white etc.) are things, the principles of reality. In Peter's tract they are things in a Scotist sense. The part played by language and thought is not relevant here. The metaphysician studies the ultimate truths about reality. Of course, the philosopher uses terms to denote these realities, which all have a real counterpart.

Peter distinguishes the categories not rationally, but really. They are distinguished *because of the nature of the thing*, not on the basis of any intellect. They are *really* distinct, that is: they possess a reality that makes them a thing. They are *formally* distinct, which means that after ultimate abstraction no predication is possible of the one category by the other. Unlike in God, this formal distinction does not imply a real identity. They are *essentially* distinct, i.e. they can exist without the other by divine omnipotence. They are *subjectively* distinct, i.e. as categories they are not mixed, are numerically, generically and specifically distinct, and can exist apart from each other. The categories have their own subjective being; they are generically or specifically or numerically distinct, and can exist separately. If the categories were also *objectively* distinct, there would be the strongest distinction, as

⁶⁷ Bridges (1959) 134-5. In Bridges's vein, Hoeres (1961) 378, is puzzled.

between being and non-being, or rational and irrational. However, they fall under 'being'.

The factual existence of these things is potential. From a single remark in our text we may conclude that, according to Peter, these category-ideas also exist *virtually* in God. Peter as a metaphysician interprets the categories as Platonic ideas of some kind. According to another Scotist viz. Francis of Meyronnes, ideas in a Platonist sense exist from the point of view of metaphysics.⁶⁸

The Scotist Petrus Thomae has in a Platonist fashion elaborated the idea to which Aristotle already subscribes, that categories are about truths in *reality*. Thinking closely follows reality to the point of being almost identical.

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⁶⁸ Bos (1997).

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APPENDIX I

SPECIMEN COLLATION

C = MS Cambridge, *University*, 1231, ff. 240ra-241vb.

E = MS Erfurt, *Wissenschaftliche Allgemeinbibliothek*, Amploniana, F. 182, ff. 114 rb.

O = Oxford, *Bodleian*, *Saville*, 18, ff. 32v-36v.

P = Padua, *Bibliotheca Antoniana*, XIV 405, ff. 70va-73rb (year: 1475).

Hanc probo¹ sic: quecumque distinguuntur² omni³ actu collativo rationis destructo⁴ vel cuiuscumque alterius potentie collative⁵, illa distinguuntur ex natura rei; sed⁶ omnia⁷ predicamenta sunt huiusmodi⁸, ergo etc.⁹ Maior patet ex precedentibus¹⁰. Minor¹¹ patet,¹² quia si predicamenta distinguuntur mediante actu collativo alicuius potentie, ergo¹³ ipsa non erunt¹⁴ predicamenta¹⁵, quod est contra dictum¹⁶ *Porphyrii*, capitulo de specie. Consequentia est evidens quia: tunc predicamenta essent entia rationis, ens autem rationis non potest esse primum¹⁷ principium rerum¹⁸ vel¹⁹ entium realium.

Further, MS E thrice omits unities of about 40 words, to be found in MS C. Of the fifth *conclusio*, a section of about 100 words is missing.

¹ Hanc probo: probatur E; ostendo P. - ² circumscripto *add.* P. - ³ et non distinguuntur E. - ⁴ *om.* P. - ⁵ rationis ... collative: precisa E. - ⁶ *om.* P. - ⁷ *om.* E. - ⁸ huius E. - ⁹ *om.* EP. - ¹⁰ dictis E; predictis P. - ¹¹ et minor O - ¹² probatur E. - ¹³ *om.* E; tunc P. - ¹⁴ essent decem E; decem *add.* O. - ¹⁵ principia prima E; rerum principia prima P. - ¹⁶ dicta E; vulgatum *add.* P. - ¹⁷ *om.* EP. - ¹⁸ rei E; *om.* P. - ¹⁹ *om.* P.

APPENDIX II

PETRUS THOMAE O.F.M.,

DE DISTINCTIONE PREDICAMENTORUM

Manscripta adhibita

1. MS Cambridge, *Univ.* 1231, ff. 240ra- 241vb (siglum: C)
2. Ed. Hieronymus Romanus de Nuciarellis, Venetiis 1517, ff. 30va-32rb (siglum: *inc.*)

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Petrus Thomae OFM,
.c.De distinctione predicamentorum

Assit principio sancta Maria meo¹

Ad evidentiam differentiarum predicamentorum intendo sic procedere: primo² premittam³ necessaria, secundo concludam⁴.

I

Quantum ad primum⁵ (I.1) premitto⁶ aliquas divisiones, (I.2) secundo declarabo aliquas propositiones.

I.1

<Divisiones>

I.1.1. De primo est ista prima⁷ divisio: 'predicamentum' potest accipi dupliciter⁸: uno modo loyce loquendo⁹, prout¹⁰ importat vel nominat¹¹ secundam intentionem; alio modo metaphysice, prout importat seu nominat¹² primam intentionem que subternitur secunde intentioni tamquam fundamentum relationi, et sic¹³ intendo de istis in proposito¹⁴.

I.1.2. Secunda divisio est ista¹⁵: eorum que distinguuntur, quedam distinguuntur distinctione rationis¹⁶, quedam¹⁷ ex natura rei. Eorum¹⁸ que distinguuntur ex natura rei, quedam distinguuntur realiter¹⁹, et quedam [f. 30vb *inc.*] formaliter²⁰, quedam²¹ essentialiter, quedam²² se totis subiective, quedam se totis obiective.

I.2

<Propositiones>

<Propositio prima>

I.2.1. De secundo²³ prima propositio est ista: illa distinguuntur ratione²⁴ qucumque distinguuntur per actum intellectus possibilis collativi vel alterius potentie collative, sicut diffinitio et diffinitum loyce loquendo.

Dico autem 'collativum', quia duplex est actus intellectus possibilis, scilicet²⁵ primitivus sive²⁶ rectus, et secundarius sive comparativus. 'Primitivus actus' dicitur quo²⁷ fertur in obiectum obiective; secundarius seu comparativus dicitur quo fertur in obiectum non absolute, sed ipsum alteri comparan-

¹ supra textum. - ² enim *add. inc.* - ³ aliqua *add. inc.* - ⁴ adduco aliqua probabilia *inc.* - ⁵ primo *add. inc.* - ⁶ premittam *inc.* - ⁷ prima *om. C.* - ⁸ duobus modis *inc.* - ⁹ *om. inc.* - ¹⁰ scilicet *add. inc.* - ¹¹ denominat *C.* - ¹² seu nominat *om. C.* - ¹³ *om. inc.* - ¹⁴ procedere seu nominat *inc.* - ¹⁵ *om. inc.* - ¹⁶ distinctione rationis: ratione *inc.* - ¹⁷ vero *add. inc.* - ¹⁸ tertia divisio est eorum *inc.* - ¹⁹ formaliter *inc.* - ²⁰ realiter *inc.* - ²¹ vero *add. inc.* - ²² quarte divisio est distinctionum essentialiter (!) quedam distinguuntur *inc.* - ²³ primo *C.* - ²⁴ hoc est intelligentie fabricatione *add. inc.* - ²⁵ *om. inc.* - ²⁶ scilicet (*sic*) *inc.* - ²⁷ qui *inc.* -

do²⁸ tunc enim²⁹ aliquid dicitur distinguere ab alio ratione quando³⁰ actu intellectus possibilis vel alterius potentie, sed tantum actu secundario et reflexo³¹. Qui quidem³² dicitur 'reflexus' sive 'comparativus'. Non solum autem intellectus possibilis est potentia collativa, sed etiam voluntas et ymaginatio, quia quilibet istarum potentiarum potest unum alteri conferre et³³ comparare. [f. 240rb] Et ideo non solum intellectus possibilis, sed etiam due³⁴ predictae potentie possunt causare sive originare distinctionem rationis. Iste enim³⁵ distinctio dicitur communi nomine 'rationis', tum quia originare sive causare actum collativum primo et principaliter convenit rationi, hoc est intellectui possibili (intellectus enim possibilis dicitur ratio quia sibi convenit proprie ratiocinari); tum etiam quia ipse intellectus possibilis ut in pluribus causat seu originat distinctionem rationis.

<Propositio secunda>

I.2.2. Secunda propositio sit ista: illa distinguuntur ex natura rei precise quorum distinctio³⁶ dependet³⁷ primarie³⁸ ex propriis principiis³⁹ terminorum et non ab actu alicuius potentie collative, qualis est distinctio lapidis ab homine et e converso.

<Propositio tertia>

I.2.3. Tertia propositio est ista: illa distinguuntur formaliter quaecumque ita se habent quod unum ab alio⁴⁰ ultimate abstractum non includit alterius⁴¹ quiditatem⁴² sive rationem, sicut patet primo in divinis, quia Bonitas sive Veritas a⁴³ Sapientia abstracta ultimate⁴⁴ non includit eius quiditatem⁴⁵ seu aliquid in ratione eius quiditativa, licet illam⁴⁶ includat ydemptice vel essentialiter. Nam ultimata abstractio in divinis sive in transcendentibus simpliciter non tollit ydemptitatem ydempticam, quamvis tollit ydemptitatem formalem.

Secundo patet in creaturis, quia intellectus a voluntate ultimate abstractus non includit quiditative voluntatem⁴⁷, et sic de aliis potentiis anime.

<De inclusione, abstractione, concernatione et modis abstractionis>

<De inclusione>

Circa que⁴⁸ est notandum quod⁴⁹ duplex est inclusio quoad presens: quedam 'idemptica seu essentialis', et⁵⁰ quedam 'formalis'.

²⁸ secundarius ... comparando *om. C.* - ²⁹ ergo *inc.* - ³⁰ aliud distinguitur ab illo non quidem primo seu directo *add. inc.* - ³¹ et reflexo *om. inc.* - ³² actus *add. inc.* - ³³ conferre et *om. inc.* - ³⁴ secunde *inc.* - ³⁵ autem *inc.* - ³⁶ distincta *inc.* - ³⁷ dependent *inc.* - ³⁸ precise *inc.* - ³⁹ rationibus *inc.* - ⁴⁰ ab alio *om. inc.* - ⁴¹ reliquum *inc.* - ⁴² quitatem sive rationem: quiditative *inc.* - ⁴³ et *inc.* - ⁴⁴ ultima *inc.* - ⁴⁵ aliquid quiditative *inc.* - ⁴⁶ ipsam *inc.* - ⁴⁷ ipsam *inc.* - ⁴⁸ hoc *inc.* - ⁴⁹ quia *inc.* - ⁵⁰ *om. inc.* -

Illa inclusio est ydemptica, quando aliqua⁵¹ ita se habent quod unum includit aliud essentialiter, et e converso, ut patet in divinis; et sic⁵² divina essentia includit essentialiter⁵³ quodlibet attributum, et e converso, quodlibet attributum⁵⁴ divinam essentiam includit, et etiam quodlibet attributum quodlibet attributum. Vel⁵⁵ quando aliqua duo⁵⁶ in uno⁵⁷ tertio includuntur essentialiter, sicut proprie passiones in subiecto⁵⁸ et etiam omnes potentie anime in ipsa anima includuntur. Quamvis⁵⁹ enim ipse⁶⁰ potentie anime in ipsa anima essentialiter includantur, non tamen una includit aliam.

Sed ista inclusio dicitur 'formalis', quando unum includit aliud in sua ratione formali seu diffinitione proprie et simpliciter dicta, seu quando unum inest alteri in primo modo dicendi per se, quemadmodum materia et forma includuntur in composito, et genus et differentia in specie.

<De abstractione>

Ad evidentiam predictorum est intelligendum quod ista abstractio est⁶¹ ultimata secundum quam aliquid abstrahitur ab omni eo quod in eius ratione quiditativa seu diffinitiva proprie et simpliciter dicta nullo modo includitur. Dico autem 'proprie et simpliciter'⁶² propter diffinitionem accidentium in qua subiectum includitur, secundum diffinitionem⁶³ *Philosophi* in libro⁶⁴ sexto⁶⁵ *Metaphysice*.^[a] Que quidem non⁶⁶ proprie⁶⁷ nec⁶⁸ simpliciter est⁶⁹ diffinitio secundum *eum*⁷⁰, sed diffinitio⁷¹ secundum quid et per additamentum. Et dicitur predicta abstractio 'ultimata', quia ulterius non potest fieri⁷² abstractio respectu illius a quo tale quid abstrahitur. Ymo omnis⁷³ alia est impossibilis simpliciter et includens contradictionem. Nam nichil potest abstrahi⁷⁴ ab alio quod⁷⁵ est de quiditate sua⁷⁶, licet possit fieri e converso: animal enim potest abstrahi ab homine seu concipi preter hominem, sed non e converso.

<De concernatione>

Est etiam intelligendum quod, cum illud quod abstrahitur, aliquid concernit, scilicet illud a quo abstrahitur, quia quanto res plura vel pauciora⁷⁷ concernit, tanto plures vel pauciores possunt fieri abstractiones circa ipsam.

'Concernatio'⁷⁸ autem quantum ad⁷⁹ presens est quintuplex:

Prima secundum quam superius concernit suum inferius, sicut animal concernit hominem⁸⁰.

⁵¹ om. inc. - ⁵² et sic: nam inc. - ⁵³ om. inc. - ⁵⁴ includat add. (sic) inc. - ⁵⁵ etiam add. inc. - ⁵⁶ om. inc. - ⁵⁷ altero inc. - ⁵⁸ essentialiter add. inc. - ⁵⁹ licet inc. - ⁶⁰ om. inc. - ⁶¹ dicitur inc. - ⁶² dicta add. inc. - ⁶³ doctrinam inc. - ⁶⁴ om. inc. - ⁶⁵ septimo inc. - ⁶⁶ est add. inc. - ⁶⁷ propria inc. - ⁶⁸ et inc. - ⁶⁹ om. inc. - ⁷⁰ essentiam inc. - ⁷¹ om. inc. - ⁷² aliqua alia add. inc. - ⁷³ om. inc. - ⁷⁴ sive add. inc. - ⁷⁵ qui inc. - ⁷⁶ eius inc. - ⁷⁷ minora inc. - ⁷⁸ concretio inc. - ⁷⁹ quantum ad: quoad inc. - ⁸⁰ sicut ... hominem: om. inc. -

[a] Arist., *Metaph.* VI.1.1026b34.

Secunda secundum quam natura concernit suum proprium suppositum.

Tertia secundum quam una ratio quiditativa concernit aliam, sicut animalitas concernit rationalitatem⁸¹.

Quarta secundum quam accidens concernit suum subiectum, ut color lignum⁸².

Quinta⁸³ secundum quam relatio concernit suum⁸⁴ fundamentum, sicut filius concernit substratum filiationi⁸⁵.

<De modis abstractionis>

Secundum ergo numerum et diversitatem istarum⁸⁶ concernationum secundum⁸⁷ modos⁸⁸ concernendi numerantur et diversificantur abstractiones⁸⁹.

Primus abstractionis modus est secundum quem⁹⁰ superius abstrahitur a suo inferiori, sicut animal ab homine.

Secundus modus est secundum quem natura abstrahitur a suo proprio supposito, ut humanitas a Petro⁹¹.

Tertius modus⁹² est secundum quem una ratio quiditativa⁹³ seu una perfectio abstrahitur ab alia, sicut animalitas a rationalitate, et econverso.

Quartus modus est secundum quem accidens abstrahitur a suo subiecto, ut [f. 240va] color a ligno.

Quintus⁹⁴ modus est secundum quem relatio abstrahitur a suo fundamento, sicut filiatio a filio.

Circa quod⁹⁵ quatuor sunt notanda.

Primum⁹⁶ est⁹⁷ quod in divinis possunt fieri quatuor abstractiones vel quatuor modi abstrahendi⁹⁸.

Primo modo⁹⁹ quando¹⁰⁰ superius abstrahitur¹⁰¹ a suo¹⁰² inferiori, sicut ab hoc ente ens, scilicet Deo, et sapientia ab hac sapientia, scilicet divina, sicut etiam¹⁰³ filiatio ab hac filiatione¹⁰⁴ divina.

Patet etiam de secundo modo, quia essentia divina potest abstrahi a quolibet supposito divino¹⁰⁵, sicut Deitas¹⁰⁶ a Patre et Filio et Spiritu Sancto.

De tertio modo patet etiam, quia essentia divina potest abstrahi a quolibet supposito¹⁰⁷ sicut deitas a Bonitate et Sapientia, et unum attributum potest abstrahi¹⁰⁸ ab alio attributo, ut Bonitas a Sapientia, sicut a Bonitate Sapientia.

De quarto¹⁰⁹ modo patet quia relationes in divinis possunt abstrahi a pro-

⁸¹ sicut ... rationalitatem *om. inc.* - ⁸² ut color lignum *om. inc.* - ⁸³ et ultimata *add. inc.* - ⁸⁴ proprium *add. inc.* - ⁸⁵ sicut ... filiationi: De prima, sicut animal concernit hominem. De secunda sicut humanitas concernit suum pro-[f. 31ra]-prium suppositum. De tertia, sicut animalitas respicitur a rationalitate. De quarta, sicut color respicit lignum. De quinta, sicut filius subtractus filiationi *inc.* - ⁸⁶ predictarum *inc.* - ⁸⁷ vel *inc.* - ⁸⁸ modum *inc.* - ⁸⁹ ita quod *add. inc.* - ⁹⁰ quod *inc.* - ⁹¹ Bernardo *inc.* - ⁹² abstractionis *add. inc.* - ⁹³ ab alia *add. inc.* - ⁹⁴ et ultimus *add. inc.* - ⁹⁵ que *inc.* - ⁹⁶ primo *inc.* - ⁹⁷ *om. inc.* - ⁹⁸ scilicet primus, secundus, tertius et quartus. Patet de *add. inc.* - ⁹⁹ *om. inc.* - ¹⁰⁰ quia in divinis aliquid *inc.* - ¹⁰¹ potest abstrahi *inc.* - ¹⁰² *om. inc.* - ¹⁰³ sicut etiam: et sic *inc.* - ¹⁰⁴ scilicet *add. inc.* - ¹⁰⁵ *om. inc.* - ¹⁰⁶ divinitas *sic semper inc.* - ¹⁰⁷ attributo et econtra *inc.* - ¹⁰⁸ potest abstrahi *om. inc.* - ¹⁰⁹ quinto (*sic inc.*

priis¹¹⁰ fundamentis, sicut paternitas a Patre et filiatio a Filio.

Secundo est notandum quod in predicamento substantie possunt fieri tres abstractiones vel tres modi¹¹¹ abstractionum tantum¹¹², quia¹¹³ ibi superius potest abstrahi a suo inferiori, ut substantia ab hac substantia¹¹⁴ et natura¹¹⁵ a supposito, ut humanitas a Petro, et¹¹⁶ una ratio quiditativa potest abstrahi ab aliis¹¹⁷.

Tertio notandum est quod in predicamento accidentium absolutorum possunt fieri tres abstractiones¹¹⁸, scilicet prima¹¹⁹, secunda¹²⁰ et quarta¹²¹. Verbi gratia¹²², ut quantitas ab hac quantitate, de secunda¹²³ sicut continuitas sive continuum¹²⁴ a ratione habendi positionem; de quarta¹²⁵ sicut quantitas a quanto.

Quarto notandum est quod in predicamento¹²⁶ accidentium respectivorum possunt fieri quatuor modi abstractionis scilicet primus¹²⁷, tertius, quartus et quintus¹²⁸. De primo ut¹²⁹ relatio ab hac relatione, de tertio sicut relatio suppositionis a relatione denominationis, de quarto sicut relatio filii¹³⁰ a substantia filii, de quinta sicut filiatio¹³¹ a potentia passiva¹³².

<Propositio quarta>

I.2.4. Quarta propositio principalis sit illa¹³³: illa distinguuntur realiter quicumque ita se habent quod quodlibet est formaliter positivum, et unum ab alio ultimate abstractum nullo modo includit aliud nec potest de alio predicari ydemptice, nec formaliter¹³⁴.

Dico primo¹³⁵ quod 'quodlibet sit formaliter positivum', nam ad hoc quod inter aliqua sic distinctio realis proprie¹³⁶, requiritur quod utrumque¹³⁷ sit formaliter positivum, quia¹³⁸ negationes et¹³⁹ privationes inter se nec ab alio proprie non¹⁴⁰ distinguuntur realiter, quia non dicunt formaliter aliquod positivum, licet negationes et¹⁴¹ privationes connotant¹⁴² et terminant¹⁴³, seu in suo secundario intellectu dicant aliquod positivum.

Secundo dico quod unum ab alio ultimate abstractum non possit de alio¹⁴⁴ predicari.

<Nota de predicatione>

Circa quod est¹⁴⁵ notandum quod secundum quod communiter dicitur, duplex est predicatio, scilicet 'essentialis' et 'accidentalis'.

Sed¹⁴⁶ 'essentialis' dividitur secundum¹⁴⁷ mentem¹⁴⁸ Scoti in *Quolibet*¹⁴⁹

¹¹⁰ suis *inc.* - ¹¹¹ abstrahendi sive *add. inc.* - ¹¹² scilicet primus, secundus et tertius. De primo patet *add. inc.* - ¹¹³ quod *inc.* - ¹¹⁴ singulari *add. inc.* - ¹¹⁵ etiam *add. inc.* - ¹¹⁶ vel *inc.* - ¹¹⁷ alia ut animalitas a rationabilitate. - ¹¹⁸ modi abstractionu *inc.* - ¹¹⁹ primus *inc.* - ¹²⁰ tertius *inc.* - ¹²¹ quartus *inc.* - ¹²² de primo *add. inc.* - ¹²³ tertio *inc.* - ¹²⁴ sive continuum *om. inc.* - ¹²⁵ quarto *inc.* - ¹²⁶ predicamentorum *add. inc.* - ¹²⁷ secundus *add. C.* - ¹²⁸ et quintus *om. C.* - ¹²⁹ De prima ut: verbi gratia *inc.* - ¹³⁰ relatio filii: filiatio *inc.* - ¹³¹ filius *inc.* - ¹³² que est fundamentum filiationis *inc.* - ¹³³ principalis sit illa: est quod *inc.* - ¹³⁴ ydemptice, nec formaliter: vere et affirmative *inc.* - ¹³⁵ autem proprie *inc.* - ¹³⁶ et stricte *add. inc.* - ¹³⁷ quodlibet extremorum *inc.* - ¹³⁸ ideo nec *inc.* - ¹³⁹ nec *inc.* - ¹⁴⁰ *om. inc.* - ¹⁴¹ negationes et *om. inc.* - ¹⁴² denotant *inc.* - ¹⁴³ concernunt *inc.* - ¹⁴⁴ vere et affirmative *add. inc.* - ¹⁴⁵ *om. inc.* - ¹⁴⁶ etiam *add. inc.* - ¹⁴⁷ de *inc.* - ¹⁴⁸ mente *inc.* - ¹⁴⁹ quolibetis *inc.* -

suo¹⁵⁰, quia (1) quedam est ydemptica, (2) quedam formalis.^[b]

(1) Ad predicationem ydempticam duo necessario¹⁵¹ requiruntur:

Primum est quod predicatum et subiectum sint idem essentialiter, nam omnis predicatio ydemptica est essentialis, sed¹⁵² non e converso. In predicatione autem essentiali subiectum est idem essentialiter cum predicato¹⁵³.

Secundum est quod utrumque extremorum¹⁵⁴ sit infinitum formaliter, sicut¹⁵⁵ in divinis, vel permissive¹⁵⁶ sicut in transcendentibus simpliciter. Dico autem 'in transcendentibus simpliciter', quia est dare gradus in transcendentibus, quia quedam sunt minus, quedam¹⁵⁷ magis transcendentia. Illud autem est transcendens simpliciter quod reperitur in omni ente tam creato quam increato, sicut 'ens', 'unum'¹⁵⁸, 'bonum'.

(2) Illa¹⁵⁹ predicatio est formalis in qua predicatum pertinet intrinsece ad rationem quiditativam subiecti, sive quando predicatum inest subiecto in primo modo dicendi per se, sicut hec¹⁶⁰ 'homo est animal rationale'.

Circa quod sunt aliqua intelligenda.

Primum est¹⁶¹ quod omnis¹⁶² predicatio formalis sit¹⁶³ ydemptica, quamvis non e converso.

Secundum est¹⁶⁴ quod solum in divinis seu in¹⁶⁵ transcendentibus simpliciter reperitur predicatio ydemptica absque formali. Verbi gratia 'Divinitas est Bonitas' et e converso, 'Bonitas est Sapientia' et e converso. Et ratio est huius [31rb *inc.*] quia solum in predictis reperitur illud quod est ratio precisa predicationis ydemptice, quod est illimitatio essentialis intimitatis, ut declarabitur¹⁶⁶ in penultima questione *De modis distinctionum* in principio.^[c]

Tertium est¹⁶⁷ quod in creaturis non reperitur¹⁶⁸ proprie et stricte predicatio ydemptica, nisi sit¹⁶⁹ formalis. Nam secundum *Scotum* in tractatu *De primo principio*,^[d] in creaturis omnis predicatio ydemptica est formalis. Cuius ratio est secundum *eum* quia¹⁷⁰ ibi¹⁷¹ nichil est idem ydemptice alteri nisi quod pertinet ad rationem eius quiditativam et¹⁷² quod est idem sibi formaliter. Et ideo secundum *eum* ibi non potest fieri predicatio aliqua¹⁷³ precise ydemptica nisi sit formalis. Potest etiam addi ratio predicta¹⁷⁴, quia in creaturis non potest reperiri proprie illimitatio essentialis intimitatis, que¹⁷⁵, ut dictum est¹⁷⁶, est causa precisa ydemptice predicationis.

¹⁵⁰ suis *inc.* - ¹⁵¹ necessaria *inc.* - ¹⁵² licet *inc.* - ¹⁵³ ut homo est animal *add. inc.* - ¹⁵⁴ scilicet subiectum et predicatum vel alterum ipsorum *add. inc.* - ¹⁵⁵ patet *add. inc.* - ¹⁵⁶ communissimum C. - ¹⁵⁷ enim *add. inc.* - ¹⁵⁸ verum *add. inc.* - ¹⁵⁹ autem *add. inc.* - ¹⁶⁰ om. *inc.* - ¹⁶¹ om. *inc.* - ¹⁶² om. *inc.* - ¹⁶³ est *inc.* - ¹⁶⁴ om. *inc.* - ¹⁶⁵ seu in: et *inc.* - ¹⁶⁶ determinabitur *inc.* - ¹⁶⁷ notandum *add. inc.* - ¹⁶⁸ potest reperiri *inc.* - ¹⁶⁹ om. *inc.* - ¹⁷⁰ quod *inc.* - ¹⁷¹ om. *inc.* - ¹⁷² vel *inc.* - ¹⁷³ om. *inc.* - ¹⁷⁴ adducta *inc.* - ¹⁷⁵ quia *inc.* - ¹⁷⁶ ea *add. inc.* -

[b] Joh. Duns Scotus, *Quodlibet*, q. 1, n. 1. [c] Petrus Thomae, *De modis distinctionum*, Qu. V, f. 51vb (Bridges, *Identity*..., p. 141, n. 5). [d] Cp. Joh. Duns Scotus, *De primo principio* IV, 9 (ed. Kluxen, p. 100).

<Propositio quinta>

I.2.5. Quinta propositio est ista: illa essentialiter [f. 240vb] distinguuntur quaecumque ita se habent quod uno existente aliud non existit vel non oportet quod aliud existat¹⁷⁷, vel quando unum est natura¹⁷⁸ prius altero, vel quando unum non dependet ab alio¹⁷⁹ essentialiter, vel quando uno destructo¹⁸⁰ aliud non destruitur, vel quando unum potest poni sine alio per aliquam potentiam in actuali existentia¹⁸¹, sicut homo¹⁸², angelus et¹⁸³ asinus.

<Propositio sexta>

I.2.6. Sexta propositio¹⁸⁴: illa distinguuntur se totis subiective quaecumque ita se habent quod realitates eorum sunt distincte numero vel individualiter vel in actuali existentia; vel quando¹⁸⁵ realitas unius est particularizata et divisa a realitate alterius, sicut Petrus et Paulus¹⁸⁶ et omnia¹⁸⁷ individua eiusdem speciei.

<Propositio septima>

I.2.7. Septima propositio et ultima est ista: illa distinguuntur se totis obiective que non conveniunt in aliqua una realitate sive ratione quiditativa, vel a quibus non potest abstrahi aliquis conceptus¹⁸⁸ unicus realis seu prime intentionis, sicut sunt differentie formales seu¹⁸⁹ individuales et illa que habent conceptum quiditativum et qualitativum, sicut 'ens' et 'bonum'.

<De ydemptitate et distinctione>

Ex hiis concludo correlarie quod quotiens dicitur distinctio, totiens dicitur ydemptitas secundum regulam *Philosophi* primo *Topicorum*:^[e] 'quot modis dicitur unum correlativorum¹⁹⁰, tot modis dicitur¹⁹¹ et reliquum'. Sicut¹⁹² enim idem et diversum sunt opposita, ita distinctio et diversitas ac ydemptitas. Quedam ergo sunt idem ratione, quedam ex natura rei, quedam formaliter, quedam essentialiter¹⁹³, quedam se totis subiective, quedam se totis obiective, ita quod descriptiones¹⁹⁴ istorum modorum ydemptitatis accipiente sunt¹⁹⁵ per oppositum ad descriptiones superius datas de modis distinctionum.

Secundum correlarium est quod predicti modi aliter se¹⁹⁶ inferunt affirmative¹⁹⁷, aliter negative, aliter¹⁹⁸ quando accipiuntur cum distinctione, et aliter quando accipiuntur cum ydemptitate.

¹⁷⁷ quod aliud existat: *existere inc.* - ¹⁷⁸ naturaliter *inc.* - ¹⁷⁹ altero *inc.* - ¹⁸⁰ vel corrupto *add. inc.* - ¹⁸¹ verbi gratia *add. inc.* - ¹⁸² et *add. inc.* - ¹⁸³ homo est *add. inc.* - ¹⁸⁴ est ista *add. inc.* - ¹⁸⁵ actualitas unius et *add. C.* - ¹⁸⁶ Bernardus *inc.* - ¹⁸⁷ quelibet *inc.* - ¹⁸⁸ unus *add. C.* - ¹⁸⁹ *om. inc.* - ¹⁹⁰ oppositorum *inc.* - ¹⁹¹ modis dicitur *om. inc.* - ¹⁹² sic sicut *inc.* - ¹⁹³ realiter *inc.* - ¹⁹⁴ distinctiones *inc.* - ¹⁹⁵ *om. inc.* - ¹⁹⁶ habent vel *add. inc.* - ¹⁹⁷ et *add. inc.* - ¹⁹⁸ *om. inc.* -

Circa quod est notandum, quod primo, quando determinant distinctionem¹⁹⁹, sic se habent²⁰⁰ quod quecumque distinguuntur se totis obiective, distinguuntur omnibus modis aliis, et sic de omnibus aliis modis²⁰¹ distinctionum respectu aliorum precedentium. Quecumque enim distinguuntur se totis subiective, distinguuntur essentialiter, formaliter, realiter, ex natura rei, ratione et sic de aliis, non tamen econverso, ymo²⁰² sic arguendo est²⁰³ fallacia consequentis. Non enim sequitur 'a et b distinguuntur ratione, ergo²⁰⁴ formaliter, nec hec valet 'distinguuntur formaliter, ergo realiter', quia 'ens', 'verum', 'bonum' distinguuntur formaliter, non tamen realiter²⁰⁵. Nec valet: 'distinguuntur realiter, ergo essentialiter', quia potentie anime inter se distinguuntur realiter et ab essentia anime sicut subiectum et propria passio; etiam²⁰⁶ conceptus generis et differentie distinguuntur realiter secundum mentem *Scoti* in diversis locis, non tamen distinguuntur essentialiter secundum *ipsum*. Nec²⁰⁷ valet: 'distinguuntur se totis subiective, ergo obiective²⁰⁸', nam individua eiusdem speciei²⁰⁹ et species eiusdem generis et etiam predicamenta distinguuntur primo et non²¹⁰ secundo modo. Individua enim conveniunt in specie specialissima²¹¹, species in genere, predicamenta²¹² in ente, et ista convenientia obiectiva vel quiditativa est realis, quia precedit omnem actum comparativum²¹³ rationis et etiam cuiuslibet potentie collative.

Secundo est notandum, quod per oppositum²¹⁴ se habent predicti modi, quando accipiuntur cum ydemptitate, quia quecumque sunt idem ratione, sunt idem omnibus aliis modis. Et sic de singulis respectu subsequentium, non tamen econverso, quia non omnia que sunt idem se totis subiective, sunt idem aliis modis²¹⁵, ut patet²¹⁶ ex predictis. Et sic de omnibus aliis modis precedentibus.

II.

<Conclusiones>

<Conclusio prima>

II. 1. Quantum ad secundum articulum²¹⁷ sit illa²¹⁸ prima conclusio: *Omnia predicamenta distinguuntur ex natura rei*.

Hanc probō sic: (a) quecumque distinguuntur omni actu collativo²¹⁹ rationis destructo²²⁰ vel cuiuscumque alterius potentie collative, illa²²¹ distinguuntur [f. 31va inc.] ex natura rei; sed omnia predicamenta sunt huiusmodi, ergo etc. Maior patet ex precedentibus²²². Minor²²³ patet²²⁴, quia si predicamenta

¹⁹⁹ determinant distinctionem: determinatur de distinctione que *inc.* – ²⁰⁰ habet *inc.* – ²⁰¹ et sic ... modis *om. inc.* – ²⁰² uno semper *inc.* – ²⁰³ committitur *inc.* – ²⁰⁴ ex natura rei', nec valet 'distinguuntur ex natura rei, ergo formaliter', quia inferius distinguitur a suo superiori ex natura rei, non tamen *add. inc.* – ²⁰⁵ ut patet ex predictis *add. inc.* – ²⁰⁶ et *inc.* – ²⁰⁷ etiam *add. inc.* – ²⁰⁸ ergo obiective *om. inc.* – ²⁰⁹ distinguuntur se totis subiective *add. inc.* – ²¹⁰ *om. inc.* – ²¹¹ *om. inc.* – ²¹² et genera *inc.* – ²¹³ actum comparativum: intellectus operationem *inc.* – ²¹⁴ obiecta *inc.* – ²¹⁵ et sic de ... modis. *inc.* – ²¹⁶ apparet *inc.* – ²¹⁷ principalem *add. inc.* – ²¹⁸ hec *inc.* – ²¹⁹ intellectus *add. inc.* – ²²⁰ *om. inc.* – ²²¹ talia *add. inc.* – ²²² predictis *inc.* – ²²³ sed minor *inc.* – ²²⁴ probatur *inc.* –

distinguuntur mediante actu collativo²²⁵ alicuius potentie, ergo ipsa non erunt²²⁶ decem rerum principia prima²²⁷, quod est contra dictum²²⁸ *Porphyrii*, capitulo de specie.^[f] Consequentia est evidens quia: tunc predicamenta essent entia rationis, ens autem rationis non potest esse primum²²⁹ principium rerum vel entium realium.

(b) Preterea. Partes subiective entis realis distinguuntur ex natura rei; sed predicamenta sunt huiusmodi, ergo etc. Maior patet quia: {f. 241ra} partes subiective entis realis sunt vere entia realia et per consequens distinguuntur ex natura rei. Minor patet per *Philosophum* quinto²³⁰ *Metaphysice*²³¹, ubi dividit ens reale in decem predicamenta.^[g]

(c) Tertio²³². Illa que per se cadunt in²³³ consideratione scientie realis distinguuntur ex natura rei; sed predicamenta sunt huiusmodi, ergo etc. Maior patet, quia illa que per se cadunt in²³⁴ consideratione scientie realis sunt entia realia, nam impossibile est ens rationis per se cadere in consideratione scientie realis²³⁵; entia autem realia distinguuntur ex natura rei, et non per actum collativo²³⁶ rationis vel alterius potentie collative. Minor patet, quia predicamenta sunt per se de consideratione scientie metaphysice, ut patet quinto²³⁷ *Metaphysice*,^[h] ubi *Philosophus* determinat de predicamentis²³⁸. Sunt etiam²³⁹ per se de consideratione naturalis²⁴⁰, ut patet²⁴¹ primo *De generatione*^[i] et quinto²⁴² *Physicorum*.^[j] Quantitas etiam est per se de consideratione metaphysice²⁴³.

(d) Quarto²⁴⁴: illa que sunt formaliter prime intentionis, distinguuntur ex natura rei; sed²⁴⁵ predicamenta sunt huiusmodi, accipiendo predicamenta²⁴⁶ metaphysice, ut hic loquimur de ipsis²⁴⁷; ergo etcetera²⁴⁸. Maior patet, quia ratio formalis prime intentionis est ex natura rei, nam intelligibilitas rei est ex natura rei; sed intelligibilitas sive ratio formalis intelligibilitatis²⁴⁹ est ratio formalis prime intentionis; ergo ratio formalis prime intentionis est ex natura rei. Maior istius rationis²⁵⁰ probatur: tum²⁵¹ quia precedit omnem actum intellectus; aptitudo²⁵² enim sive²⁵³ potentia intelligendi precedit omnem actum intellectus, nam circumscripto omni actu intellectus adhuc habet res intelligibilitatem²⁵⁴; tum quia²⁵⁵ entitas et unitas²⁵⁶, que sunt rationes intelligibilitatis²⁵⁷, sunt ex natura rei. Ista etiam maior declaratur²⁵⁸ in questionibus²⁵⁹ *De esse intelligibili*.^[k] Minor²⁶⁰ pronunc²⁶¹ supponitur²⁶².

²²⁵ rationis vel *add. inc.* - ²²⁶ essent *inc.* - ²²⁷ predicamenta *inc.* - ²²⁸ vulgatum *add. inc.* - ²²⁹ *om. inc.* - ²³⁰ secundo *inc.* - ²³¹ principio primo *add. inc.* - ²³² preterea *inc.* - ²³³ sub *inc.* - ²³⁴ sub *inc.* - ²³⁵ sunt entia ... realis *om. inc.* - ²³⁶ intellectus *inc.* - ²³⁷ et sexto *add. C.* (Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, V.7.1017a). - ²³⁸ ipsis *inc.* - ²³⁹ entia *add. inc.* - ²⁴⁰ philosophi *inc.* - ²⁴¹ apparet *inc.* - ²⁴² septimo *inc.* (Aristotle, *Physics* V.1.225b). - ²⁴³ septimo *add. inc.* - ²⁴⁴ preterea *inc.* - ²⁴⁵ omnia *add. inc.* - ²⁴⁶ *om. inc.* - ²⁴⁷ eis *inc.* - ²⁴⁸ *om. C.* - ²⁴⁹ sive ... intelligibilitatis *om. inc.* - ²⁵⁰ syllogismi *inc.* - ²⁵¹ *om. inc.* - ²⁵² accipiendo *inc.* - ²⁵³ ut *inc.* - ²⁵⁴ intelligentem *inc.* - ²⁵⁵ tum quia: cum etiam *inc.* - ²⁵⁶ veritas *inc.* - ²⁵⁷ intelligentis *inc.* - ²⁵⁸ declarabitur *inc.* - ²⁵⁹ conclusionibus *inc.* - ²⁶⁰ ideo *inc.* - ²⁶¹ nunc *inc.* - ²⁶² supponatur *inc.* -

[f] Porphyrius, in *Arist. latinus* I 6-7, p. 9¹². [g] Arist., *Metaph.* IV.7.1077a22-3. [h] Arist., *Metaph.* IV.7. [i] Arist., *De gener. et corr.* I capp. 1-10. [j] Arist., *Phys.* V capp. 1-6. [k] Petrus Thomae, *De esse intelligibili*, ubi?

(e) Preterea. Quecumque constituuntur et distinguuntur per modos intrinsecos, distinguuntur ex natura rei; sed predicamenta sunt huiusmodi; ergo etc. Maior est evidens²⁶³, quia modi intrinseci sunt ex natura rei, ut apparet in ultima questione²⁶⁴ *De modis distinctionum*²⁶⁵. Minor probatur, quia per²⁶⁶ perseitatem²⁶⁷ et inesseitatem²⁶⁸ et adalienitatem²⁶⁹.

<Conclusio secunda>

II. 2. Secunda conclusio est hec: *omnia predicamenta distinguuntur formaliter*.

Hanc probo sic: (a) quecumque sic se habent quod unum ab alio ultimate abstractum non includit aliud quiditative seu in suo conceptu quiditativo, illa distinguuntur formaliter; sed omnia predicamenta sic se habent, ergo etc. Maior patet ex premissis. Minor²⁷⁰ patet discurrendo per singula predicamenta.

Confirmatur²⁷¹: quecumque sic se habent quod unum potest existere sine alio, illa distinguuntur formaliter; sed omnia predicamenta sic se habent; ergo etc. Maior est evidens²⁷² quia: oppositum predicati infert oppositum subiecti. Et²⁷³ minor probatur inferius.

(b) Preterea. Si predicamenta sint²⁷⁴ idem formaliter²⁷⁵, ipsa sunt²⁷⁶ permixta²⁷⁷, quod est contra²⁷⁸ *Philosophum*²⁷⁹ primo *Posteriorum*.^[1] Consequentia tenet²⁸⁰ ex²⁸¹ se, igitur et antecedens.

(c) Preterea. Si predicamenta sint²⁸² idem formaliter, ergo ipsa non erunt decem prima principia rerum²⁸³. Consequens²⁸⁴ falsum, ut predictum est. Ergo illud ex quo sequitur. Consequentia patet de se²⁸⁵.

Sed forte hic dicitur²⁸⁶ quod, licet²⁸⁷ predicamenta sint idem formaliter, tamen²⁸⁸ poterit salvari²⁸⁹ dictum *Porphyrii*, sicut salvatur quod sint decem genera prima; genera²⁹⁰ enim sunt habentia²⁹¹ rationem principii, quia sunt principia specierum²⁹² et individuorum, et ideo ad istud²⁹³ sufficit ista²⁹⁴ distinctio rationis.

Respondeo quod si predicamenta non distinguuntur nisi ratione sola, nullus²⁹⁵ potest²⁹⁶ salvare²⁹⁷ illud dictum *Porphyrii*²⁹⁸, quia ens rationis non potest habere rationem primi principii, quia²⁹⁹ est ens diminutum. Ens etiam³⁰⁰ rationis non potest esse principium entis realis, tum quia est posterius, tum quia est imperfectius.

Et³⁰¹ quando dicitur quod 'genera sunt principia³⁰²', dico quod vel acci-

²⁶³ manifesta inc. - ²⁶⁴ conclusione inc. - ²⁶⁵ Petrus Thomae, Qu. XI, f. 60vb (Bridges, *Identity* ..., p. 156, n. 46). - ²⁶⁶ quia per: propter inc. - ²⁶⁷ specialitatem inc. - ²⁶⁸ entitatem inc. - ²⁶⁹ accidentalitatem inc. - ²⁷⁰ autem add. inc. - ²⁷¹ etiam add. inc. - ²⁷² est evidens: patet inc. - ²⁷³ om. inc. - ²⁷⁴ sunt inc. - ²⁷⁵ ergo add. inc. - ²⁷⁶ erunt inc. - ²⁷⁷ in permixtis C - ²⁷⁸ ut inc. - ²⁷⁹ apparet inc. - ²⁸⁰ patet inc. - ²⁸¹ de inc. - ²⁸² sunt inc. - ²⁸³ om. C. - ²⁸⁴ est add. inc. - ²⁸⁵ de se om. inc. - ²⁸⁶ sed forte hic dicitur: dices inc. - ²⁸⁷ dato quod inc. - ²⁸⁸ adhuc inc. - ²⁸⁹ istus add. inc. - ²⁹⁰ generaliter inc. - ²⁹¹ sunt habentia: habent inc. - ²⁹² rerum specialissimorum inc. - ²⁹³ hoc inc. - ²⁹⁴ sola inc. - ²⁹⁵ in nullo inc. - ²⁹⁶ posset inc. - ²⁹⁷ salvari inc. - ²⁹⁸ om. inc. - ²⁹⁹ que inc. - ³⁰⁰ autem inc. - ³⁰¹ tunc add. inc. - ³⁰² entis add. inc. -

[1] Cp. Arist., *Anal. Post.* I.15.79b8-11.

pis³⁰³ 'genus' formaliter pro secunda intentione, vel pro fundamento eius, scilicet³⁰⁴ pro prima intentione. Si primo modo, tunc propositio non est vera. Si³⁰⁵ secundo modo, tunc³⁰⁶ est vera, et³⁰⁷ habes³⁰⁸ propositum³⁰⁹, scilicet³¹⁰ quod conceptus predicamentales non distinguuntur sola ratione, quia prime intentiones non sunt precise entia rationis, ymo sunt vere entia realia, ut nunc suppono.

Preterea. Arguitur sic ad³¹¹ conclusionem generalem³¹². Quecumque ita se habent quod aliquid ex natura rei attribuitur uni quod non alteri, illa distinguuntur for-[f. 31vb inc.]-maliter; sed predicamenta ita se habent; ergo etc. Maior est evidens, quia oppositum predicati infert oppositum subiecti, quia si datur oppositum predicati, scilicet quod sunt idem formaliter, oppositum subiecti³¹³ sequitur³¹⁴: 'quicquid attribuitur uni, attribuitur³¹⁵ alteri ex natura rei'. Minor patet, quia perseitates absolute³¹⁶ attribuuntur substantie absolute³¹⁷ ex natura rei, et³¹⁸ non possunt³¹⁹ attribui³²⁰ nec³²¹ inesse alteri predicamento. Item, patet in multis³²² aliis que attribuuntur multis aliis predicamentis, sed non omnibus³²³.

<Conclusio tertia>

II.3. Tertia conclusio [f. 241rb C] est illa: *omnia predicamenta distinguuntur realiter*.

Probo³²⁴ sic: (a) quecumque ita se habent quod quodlibet est formaliter positivum, et unum ab alio ultimate abstractum non potest ydemptice de alio predicari nec formaliter, illa distinguuntur realiter; sed omnia predicamenta sic se habent; ergo etc. Maior patet ex predictis. Et³²⁵ minor³²⁶ patet quantum ad primam³²⁷ partem, scilicet quod quodlibet predicamentum sit formaliter quid³²⁸ positivum. Nam secundum commune³²⁹ dictum³³⁰ negationes et privationes non sunt per se, sed per accidens in aliquo predicamento.

Secunda pars³³¹ probatur. Et³³² primo de predicatione ydemptica sic³³³. Nullum predicamentum est formaliter vel permissive infinitum; ergo unum non potest de alio³³⁴ ydemptice predicari. Consequentia patet ex dictis³³⁵ in tertia propositione. Antecedens etiam patet quod non sunt infinitum formaliter, quia non sunt idem quod Deus, nec³³⁶ in Deo formaliter. Preterea, ipsa predicamenta continentur sub ente finito, quia in ipsa dividitur ens immediate. Secundo patet quod non sunt infinita permissive³³⁷, tum quia non sunt transcendentia, tum quia non possunt contrahi ad ens formaliter infinitum.

³⁰³ accipitur inc. - ³⁰⁴ pro fundamento eius, scilicet: fundamentaliter inc. - ³⁰⁵ autem accipiamus add. inc. - ³⁰⁶ propositio add. inc. - ³⁰⁷ sic add. inc. - ³⁰⁸ habeo inc. - ³⁰⁹ intentum inc. - ³¹⁰ om. inc. - ³¹¹ contra inc. - ³¹² primam inc. - ³¹³ quia si ... subiecti om. inc. - ³¹⁴ scilicet quod inc. - ³¹⁵ uni, attribuitur om. inc. - ³¹⁶ et absolubilitas inc. - ³¹⁷ om. inc. - ³¹⁸ om. inc. - ³¹⁹ potest inc. - ³²⁰ uni add. inc. - ³²¹ et inc. - ³²² om. inc. - ³²³ que ... non omnibus om. inc. - ³²⁴ hanc probo inc. - ³²⁵ om. inc. - ³²⁶ etiam add. inc. - ³²⁷ sui inc. - ³²⁸ om. inc. - ³²⁹ quod inc. - ³³⁰ est add. inc. - ³³¹ secunda pars: minor inc. - ³³² om. inc. - ³³³ om. inc. - ³³⁴ altero inc. - ³³⁵ predictis inc. - ³³⁶ sunt add. inc. - ³³⁷ permissione, id est permissive inc. -

Sed³³⁸ probatur³³⁹ minor sic de predicatione formali. Predicamenta non sunt idem formaliter; ergo unum non potest de alio formaliter predicari. Consequentia est evidens, quia ad hoc quod aliqua de se invicem predicentur formaliter³⁴⁰, oportet necessario quod sint idem formaliter; alias³⁴¹ predicatio esset nulla. Sicut enim predicatio ydemptica presupponit ydemptitatem ydempticam, ita predicatio formalis presupponit ydemptitatem formalem³⁴². Antecedens patet ex secunda conclusione premissa.

(b) Preterea. Quaecumque distinguuntur sicut realitas et realitas³⁴³, illa³⁴⁴ distinguuntur realiter; sed predicamenta sic se habent; ergo etcetera³⁴⁵.

Maiores patet. Et minor probatur quia: quaecumque distinguuntur sicut res et res³⁴⁶, distinguuntur sicut realitas et realitas; sed omnia³⁴⁷ predicamenta distinguuntur sicut res et res; ergo etcetera. Maior³⁴⁸ patet, quia maior distinctio arguit minorem unitatem; sed distinctio rei et rei et essentie et essentie est maior quam realitatis et realitatis; ergo etcetera. Maior istius syllogismi patet. Minor³⁴⁹ probatur dupliciter. Primo³⁵⁰ ex conclusione sequenti³⁵¹. Secundo sic. Quaecumque distinguuntur sicut ens et ens, illa³⁵² distinguuntur sicut res et res; sed omnia predicamenta distinguuntur sicut ens³⁵³ et ens; ergo etcetera³⁵⁴. Maior patet, quia ens et res convertuntur secundum Avicennam tertio *Metaphysice* sue.^[m] Minor probatur, quia ens quiditative includitur in rationibus formalibus ipsorum predicamentorum sicut superius in suis³⁵⁵ inferioribus³⁵⁶.

<Conclusio quarta>

II. 4. Quarta conclusio³⁵⁷: *omnia predicamenta distinguuntur essentialiter*.

Probo³⁵⁸ sic. (a) Res unius predicamenti per divinam potentiam potest poni in actuali existentia absque re alterius predicamenti, et e converso; ergo unum³⁵⁹ distinguitur ab alio essentialiter. Consequentia est evidens ex quarta³⁶⁰ propositione premissa. Et antecedens communiter conceditur a doctoribus et³⁶¹ philosophis veris et catholicis de predicamentis absolutis. Sed de predicamentis respectivis est magis dubium et magna difficultas, utrum possint poni absque absolutis.

Et ideo tenendo opinionem novam *cuiusdam subtilissimi*³⁶² probo³⁶³ sic: nam fundamentum ad quod est relatio, se habet³⁶⁴ in genere cause (1) efficientis vel (2) formalis vel (3) materialis vel (4) finalis. Si (ad 1) efficientis vel (ad 2) finalis, habeo propositum, quia Prima Causa potest supplere

³³⁸ preterea inc. – ³³⁹ illa add. inc. – ³⁴⁰ om. inc. – ³⁴¹ aliter inc. – ³⁴² sicut enim ... formalem om. inc. – ³⁴³ realiter inc. – ³⁴⁴ om. inc. – ³⁴⁵ om. C. – ³⁴⁶ illa add. inc. – ³⁴⁷ omnia inc. – ³⁴⁸ istius syllogismi add. inc. – ³⁴⁹ etiam principalis add. C. – ³⁵⁰ om. inc. – ³⁵¹ consequenti inc. – ³⁵² om. inc. – ³⁵³ res inc. – ³⁵⁴ ergo etcetera om. C. – ³⁵⁵ suo inc. – ³⁵⁶ inferiori inc. – ³⁵⁷ est ista add. inc. – ³⁵⁸ hanc probo inc. – ³⁵⁹ predicamentum add. inc. – ³⁶⁰ quinta inc. – ³⁶¹ doctoribus et om. inc. – ³⁶² subtilis inc. – ³⁶³ eam probando inc. – ³⁶⁴ ad ipsam add. inc. –

[m] Avicenna, in *Avicenna latinus, Liber de philosophia* (...), III, 2.

omnem causalitatem efficientem vel finalem.

Si autem (ad 3) materialis, quero an esset³⁶⁵ eius materia *in qua* vel *ex qua*. Non *ex qua*, quia³⁶⁶ secundum *Philosophum* octavo *Metaphysice*^[n] accidentia talem materiam non habent. Nam sicut impossibile est quod³⁶⁷ ex non-substantiis fiat substantia³⁶⁸, secundum *Philosophum* primo *Physicorum*³⁶⁹, eque³⁷⁰ impossibile est quod ex substantiis fiat non-substantia. Si autem sit³⁷¹ materia *in qua*, cum accidens absolutum hoc modo dependeat ad materiam vel ad subiectum, hoc tamen non obstante potest per divinam potentiam ab eo³⁷² separari et per se poni. Ergo non obstante illa dependentia relationis³⁷³ ad³⁷⁴ fundamentum sicut ad materiam *in qua*, potest³⁷⁵ ipsa relatio actualiter poni per se.

Nec³⁷⁶ potest³⁷⁷ dici quod sic dependeat ad fundamentum sicut ad causam (ad 4) formalem, nam (1) tunc esset absolutum intrinsecum respectivo, et per consequens illud quod est formaliter respectivum, esset formaliter absolutum, quod est valde absurdum et³⁷⁸ oppositum³⁷⁹ in adiecto³⁸⁰. Illud enim in cuius ratione formali sive quiditativa includitur absolutum aliquod, est formaliter absolutum. (2) Tunc etiam³⁸¹ predicamenta respectiva non essent partes subiective entis per se³⁸², sed per accidens, quod est contra *Philosophum* secundo *Physicorum*,^[o] aliter materia et forma coinciderent, quod est contra *Philosophum ibidem*³⁸³. (3) Tum etiam³⁸⁴ causa formalis non est³⁸⁵ quid simplex, sed quid compositum ex materia et forma. Tunc etiam³⁸⁶, cum quolibet res sit formaliter talis per propriam³⁸⁷ causam formalem, respectus esset formaliter respectus per absolutum, quod est [f. 32ra *inc.*] manifeste [f. 241va C] falsum.

(b) Item³⁸⁸, quero quare fundamentum in duobus extremis positum non possit poni absque relatione et³⁸⁹ quare relatio non potest poni absque fundamentis vel absque fundamento vel³⁹⁰ termino.

In³⁹¹ huiusmodi³⁹² enim³⁹³ non potest alia ratio reddi nisi quod unum essentialiter dependet ab alio. Hoc supposito arguitur sic³⁹⁴: primum independens potest simpliciter terminare³⁹⁵ omnem dependentiam sufficientem³⁹⁶ ad actualem existentiam³⁹⁷; sed ex supplemento³⁹⁸ alicuius requisiti³⁹⁹ ad actualem existentiam alterius potest argui⁴⁰⁰ necessario⁴⁰¹ possibilitas separationis unius⁴⁰² ab alio; ergo ex hoc quod⁴⁰³ primum⁴⁰⁴ independens potest dependentiam cuiuscumque requisiti ad⁴⁰⁵ actualem existentiam alicuius supplere et terminare⁴⁰⁶, potest quodcumque⁴⁰⁷ immediate poni per ipsum; ergo

³⁶⁵ quia vel erit *inc.* – ³⁶⁶ cum *inc.* – ³⁶⁷ om. *inc.* – ³⁶⁸ fiat substantia: fieri substantiam *inc.* – ³⁶⁹ de generatione *inc.* – ³⁷⁰ similiter *inc.* – ³⁷¹ eius *add. inc.* – ³⁷² ab eo *om. inc.* – ³⁷³ vel respectus *add. inc.* – ³⁷⁴ eius *add. inc.* – ³⁷⁵ poterit *inc.* – ³⁷⁶ non *inc.* – ³⁷⁷ etiam *add. inc.* – ³⁷⁸ etiam *add. inc.* – ³⁷⁹ obiectum *inc.* – ³⁸⁰ opposito *inc.* – ³⁸¹ illa *inc.* – ³⁸² cum hoc non essent entia per se *add. inc.* – ³⁸³ cum aliter ... *ibidem om. inc.* – ³⁸⁴ tunc etiam : cum aliter C. – ³⁸⁵ esset *inc.* – ³⁸⁶ tunc etiam *om. inc.* – ³⁸⁷ per propriam: propter eius *inc.* – ³⁸⁸ preterea *inc.* – ³⁸⁹ vel *inc.* – ³⁹⁰ et *inc.* – ³⁹¹ om. *inc.* – ³⁹² huius *inc.* – ³⁹³ om. *inc.* – ³⁹⁴ arguitur sic *om. inc.* – ³⁹⁵ determinare *inc.* – ³⁹⁶ sufficienter *inc.* – ³⁹⁷ cuiuscumque *add. inc.* – ³⁹⁸ ex supplemento: supplere *inc.* – ³⁹⁹ acquisiti *inc.* – ⁴⁰⁰ alicuius *inc.* – ⁴⁰¹ om. *inc.* – ⁴⁰² illius *inc.* – ⁴⁰³ om. *inc.* – ⁴⁰⁴ principium *inc.* – ⁴⁰⁵ mg., *inc.* – ⁴⁰⁶ et terminare: vel determinare *inc.* – ⁴⁰⁷ quicumque *inc.*

[n] Arist., *Metaph.* VII.5.1031a1-2. [o] Cp. Arist., *Phys.* II.1.193a28-30, b6-8.

per consequens primum⁴⁰⁸ independents, quod est⁴⁰⁹ Deus, potest supplere vicem fundamenti relationis vel respectus⁴¹⁰ et terminare dependentiam relationis ad ipsum et, per consequens, potest⁴¹¹ ipsam ponere in actuali existentia absque fundamento. Minor de se patet. Et⁴¹² maior declaratur⁴¹³, (1) tum quia ipsum⁴¹⁴ independents simpliciter⁴¹⁵ a nullo dependet et ideo potest omnem dependentiam terminare sufficienter; ratio enim independentie alicuius⁴¹⁶ ab aliquo precise est ratio terminandi dependentiam illius ad ipsum; (2) tum etiam⁴¹⁷ quia primum⁴¹⁸ simpliciter⁴¹⁹ independents continet virtualiter⁴²⁰ relationem, et per consequens potest ipsum sive dependentiam ipsius⁴²¹ sufficienter terminare; alias⁴²² virtualiter non contineret relationem⁴²³.

(c) Item⁴²⁴, materia potest poni in actuali existentia sine forma; ergo relatio sine fundamento. Consequentia patet a simili, (1) tum quia sicut relatio dependet a fundamento sic⁴²⁵ materia a forma, (2) tum⁴²⁶ quia sicut Deus in separatione materie a forma supplet vicem terminandi dependentiam ipsius ad formam, ita videtur possibile quod Deus potest⁴²⁷ supplere vicem fundamenti in terminando dependentiam ipsius relationis ad illud. Antecedens supponitur ad presens, et probatur a *Scoto* quarto⁴²⁸ *Sententiarum*.^[p]

(d) Ultimo arguitur sic: immediatior et intimior est natura supposito quam relatio fundamento; sed Deus potest facere naturam absque supposito⁴²⁹ proprio; ergo potest facere relationem sine fundamento⁴³⁰. Maior patet, (1) tum⁴³¹ quia natura quidificat⁴³² suppositum formaliter, (2) tum quia est⁴³³ formaliter ipsum; (3) tum⁴³⁴ quia dat sibi nomen et diffinitionem, que non conveniunt relationi respectu fundamenti. Minor patet⁴³⁵ de facto in Christo, et⁴³⁶ posset⁴³⁷ probari per rationes quas adducunt *Scotus*^[q] et⁴³⁸ *alii doctores* supra tertium *Sententiarum* ad probandum possibilitatem incarnationis.

<Conclusio quinta>

II. 5. Quinta conclusio est⁴³⁹ quod *praedicamenta distinguuntur se totis subjective*.

Hanc⁴⁴⁰ probo sic: (a) illa distinguuntur se totis subjective vel secundum esse subjectivum quando illud quod realiter reperitur in uno, non reperitur in alio; sed omnia predicamenta sunt huiusmodi, ergo etc. Maior patet⁴⁴¹. Et⁴⁴² minor etiam⁴⁴³ quia⁴⁴⁴ predicamenta⁴⁴⁵ sunt impermixta, ut habetur primo *Posteriorum*.^[r]

⁴⁰⁸ principium inc. – ⁴⁰⁹ quod est: ut inc. – ⁴¹⁰ vel respectus om. inc. – ⁴¹¹ ad inc. – ⁴¹² sed inc. – ⁴¹³ sic add. inc. – ⁴¹⁴ principium inc. – ⁴¹⁵ similiter inc. – ⁴¹⁶ illius inc. – ⁴¹⁷ om. inc. – ⁴¹⁸ principium inc. – ⁴¹⁹ similiter inc. – ⁴²⁰ omnem add. inc. – ⁴²¹ eius inc. – ⁴²² aliter inc. – ⁴²³ ipsam inc. – ⁴²⁴ preterea inc. – ⁴²⁵ sicut C. – ⁴²⁶ etiam add. inc. – ⁴²⁷ posset inc. – ⁴²⁸ secundo inc. – ⁴²⁹ om. inc. – ⁴³⁰ potest facere relationem sine fundamento: etcetera inc. – ⁴³¹ om. inc. – ⁴³² significat inc. – ⁴³³ denominat inc. – ⁴³⁴ etiam add. inc. – ⁴³⁵ apparet inc. – ⁴³⁶ etiam inc. – ⁴³⁷ potest inc. – ⁴³⁸ etiam add. inc. – ⁴³⁹ ista add. inc. – ⁴⁴⁰ om. inc. – ⁴⁴¹ est evidens inc. – ⁴⁴² om. inc. – ⁴⁴³ patet add. inc. – ⁴⁴⁴ coordinationes add. inc. – ⁴⁴⁵ predicamentorum inc. –
[p] Joh. Duns Scotus, *In IV Sent.*, d. ii, q. 3, n. 15. [q] *Opus Oxoniense*, III, dist. 1, qu. 1, n. 5 (14, 65-66) [r] Arist., *Anal. Post.* I.15.79b8-11.

*Diceres*⁴⁴⁶ *forte*⁴⁴⁷ quod minor est falsa dupliciter quia: (1) entitas et alia transcendentia reperiuntur in quolibet predicamento; (2) secundo quia secundum⁴⁴⁸ *Philosophum* in *Predicamentis*, capitulo de qualitate⁴⁴⁹ in fine,^[s] unum et idem ens reperitur in diversis predicamentis, sicut patet de scientia. Dicit⁴⁵⁰ enim sic ibi⁴⁵¹: 'si contingat⁴⁵² idem et quale⁴⁵³ et relativum vel relationem esse⁴⁵⁴, nullum⁴⁵⁵ est inconueniens in utrisque generibus⁴⁵⁶ enumerari⁴⁵⁷.'

*Respondeo*⁴⁵⁸ ad primum (ad 1) quod, licet transcendentia aliqua reperiuntur in pluribus vel in omnibus predicamentis, tamen quodlibet eorum contrahitur ad proprium esse cuiuslibet predicamenti, et per consequens habent aliud et aliud esse subiectivum in alio et in alio predicamento.

Ad secundum (ad 2) dico⁴⁵⁹ quod dupliciter potest dici aliquid ens unum, scilicet unitate per se et⁴⁶⁰ unitate per accidens, ut patet⁴⁶¹ per⁴⁶² *Philosophum* quinto *Metaphysice*.^[t] Quando ergo⁴⁶³ dicit *Philosophus* quod unum et idem est in diversis predicamentis, accipit unum per accidens et non unum per se.

Et hoc patet primo per rationem, et⁴⁶⁴ secundo per expressam expositionem *Commentatoris* super illum⁴⁶⁵ locum. Et⁴⁶⁶ ratio est ista: impossibile est⁴⁶⁷ aliquid pertinere ad aliquod predicamentum nisi includat aliquid illius predicamenti, vel rem vel modum vel aliam⁴⁶⁸ rationem; sed ex pertinentibus ad diversa predicamenta non potest fieri vel constitui unum ens per se, ut patet⁴⁶⁹ per⁴⁷⁰ *Philosophum*, ibidem; ergo etcetera.

Confirmatur quia⁴⁷¹: si ens unum per se est in diversis predicamentis, ergo ratio formalis unius predicamenti potest predicari⁴⁷² de ratione formalis⁴⁷³ alterius predicamenti. Quod est falsum.

Secundo confirmatur ex⁴⁷⁴ quarto *Topicorum*,^[u] ubi dicitur⁴⁷⁵ quod una et eadem species continetur in⁴⁷⁶ diversis generibus non⁴⁷⁷ subalternatim positae, dummodo sub aliquo tertio genere⁴⁷⁸ ponantur, ut patet de homine et angelo.

Commentator autem⁴⁷⁹, ubi supra, dicit: nam, cum sit verum unam et eandem speciem sive⁴⁸⁰ rem in⁴⁸¹ diversis generibus non posse [f. 241vb C] esse suppositum⁴⁸², tamen contingit⁴⁸³ secundum⁴⁸⁴ aliud et aliud⁴⁸⁵ unam et eandem⁴⁸⁶ duobus generibus⁴⁸⁷ subverti vel⁴⁸⁸ subiectari, ut in eo, quod iam supra dictum est: cum Sortes substantia sit, predicatur⁴⁸⁹ vero⁴⁹⁰ ad aliquid, cumque⁴⁹¹ substantia discrepet⁴⁹² atque⁴⁹³ relatio⁴⁹⁴, non tamen est inconueniens

⁴⁴⁶ dices inc. - ⁴⁴⁷ om. inc. - ⁴⁴⁸ per inc. - ⁴⁴⁹ vel quantitate add. inc. - ⁴⁵⁰ dicitur C. - ⁴⁵¹ philosophus. Amplius add. inc. - ⁴⁵² hoc add. inc. - ⁴⁵³ esse add. inc. - ⁴⁵⁴ relativum vel relationem esse om. inc. - ⁴⁵⁵ idem nichil inc. - ⁴⁵⁶ omnibus inc. - ⁴⁵⁷ vocari hoc autem inc. - ⁴⁵⁸ dico inc. - ⁴⁵⁹ potest dici inc. - ⁴⁶⁰ om. inc. - ⁴⁶¹ apparet inc. - ⁴⁶² om. C. - ⁴⁶³ enim inc. - ⁴⁶⁴ om. inc. - ⁴⁶⁵ illud inc. - ⁴⁶⁶ om. inc. - ⁴⁶⁷ om. C. - ⁴⁶⁸ aliquam inc. - ⁴⁶⁹ apparet inc. - ⁴⁷⁰ om. C. - ⁴⁷¹ om. inc. - ⁴⁷² potest predicari: predicabitur inc. - ⁴⁷³ ratione formali: re inc. - ⁴⁷⁴ quia regula est Philosophi inc. - ⁴⁷⁵ ubi dicitur om. inc. - ⁴⁷⁶ sub inc. - ⁴⁷⁷ om. inc. - ⁴⁷⁸ illa add. inc. - ⁴⁷⁹ Commentator autem: probatur et per consequens inc. - ⁴⁸⁰ speciem sive om. inc. - ⁴⁸¹ om. inc. - ⁴⁸² illud add. inc. - ⁴⁸³ convenit inc. - ⁴⁸⁴ sed inc. - ⁴⁸⁵ et aliud: quod inc. - ⁴⁸⁶ speciem in add. inc. - ⁴⁸⁷ om. inc. - ⁴⁸⁸ subverti vel subiectari: posse subici inc. - ⁴⁸⁹ [s] Arist., Cat. 8.11a20-37. [t] Arist., Metaph. V.7.1017a7-8. [u] Arist., Top. IV.1.121b3-4.

ens eundem Sortem in eo quod homo⁴⁹⁵, substantie supponi, in eo autem quod habet filium⁴⁹⁶, relationi⁴⁹⁷. Quocirca⁴⁹⁸ si⁴⁹⁹ secundum⁵⁰⁰ aliam et aliam rem duobus generibus eadem res quelibet diversimode⁵⁰¹, supponitur⁵⁰², non est⁵⁰³ inconueniens⁵⁰⁴. Ita quoque⁵⁰⁵ [f. 32rb *inc.*] et habitum dicimus in eo quod⁵⁰⁶ habitudines alicuius rei sunt, et⁵⁰⁷ ponuntur in relatione, <et> in eo quod secundum eas⁵⁰⁸ aliqua qualia⁵⁰⁹ dicuntur, in qualitate numerantur. Quocirca⁵¹⁰ non⁵¹¹ est inconueniens unam et eandem rem secundum diversas nature sue potentias generis⁵¹², si contingat, pluribus annumerari generibus. Hoc Boetius⁵¹³.^[v]

Patet aliter⁵¹⁴ ex coordinatione⁵¹⁵ verborum⁵¹⁶ quod ipse Boetius accipit⁵¹⁷ non unum per se ens, sed unum⁵¹⁸ per accidens, quod dicit 'quid aggregatum ex rebus vel modis vel⁵¹⁹ rationibus diversorum predicamentorum'. Si enim primo acciperet⁵²⁰ unum ens per se et postea per accidens, contradiceret sibi ipsi, quod non est dicendum.

(b) Preterea ad principale⁵²¹: quecumque distinguuntur numero, genere et specie, distinguuntur se totis subiective; sed predicamenta sunt huiusmodi; ergo etcetera. Maior patet, et minor similiter⁵²².

Sed forte hic⁵²³ dicitur⁵²⁴ secundum propositionem vulgarem⁵²⁵: 'accidentia non ponunt⁵²⁶ in numerum cum substantia⁵²⁷.'

Respondetur et dicitur⁵²⁸ quod duplex est numerositas, scilicet numeralis et suppositalis. Auctoritas enim⁵²⁹ intelligitur secundo modo⁵³⁰, non primo. Nam⁵³¹ in quolibet predicamento sunt distincta⁵³² individua et per consequens distincte⁵³³ numerositates vel unitates numerandi⁵³⁴.

(c) Tertio sic⁵³⁵: quecumque possunt⁵³⁶ sibi⁵³⁷ invicem existere actualiter⁵³⁸, distinguuntur se totis subiective; sed omnia predicamenta⁵³⁹ sic se habent; ergo etc. Maior patet quia: oppositum predicati⁵⁴⁰ infert oppositum subiecti⁵⁴¹. Et minor declarata est superius, in quarta conclusione.

Et confirmatur ista ratio⁵⁴², quia esse subiectivum et esse actualis existentie idem sunt essentialiter⁵⁴³ et convertibiliter, ergo posita tali distinctione oppositorum⁵⁴⁴ in uno necessario ponitur in alio. Ergo⁵⁴⁵ per consequens quecumque possunt⁵⁴⁶ sibi⁵⁴⁷ invicem existere actualiter, distinguuntur se totis subiective.

489 prima possunt *inc.* - 490 vere *inc.* - 491 cum *inc.* - 492 discreparet *inc.* - 493 a *inc.* - 494 relatione *inc.* - 495 est *add. inc.* - 496 finitum *inc.* - 497 relatione *inc.* - 498 preterea tum quia *inc.* - 499 MS Madrid, Bibl. Naz., 1796, f. 6ra; *om. inc.*; C. - 500 *om. C.* - 501 diversa *inc.* - 502 supponatur *inc.* - 503 non est: nichil - 504 cadit *inc.* - 505 queque *inc.* - 506 in eo quod: et *inc.* - 507 *om. inc.* - 508 eos C. - 509 alia qualia MS Padua Ant. 407, f. 73ra. - 510 ergo etiam *inc.* - 511 nullum *inc.* - 512 MS Madrid, 1796, f. 6rb; et *add. C. inc.* - 513 hoc Boetius: hoc modo Boetius *inc.* - 514 ergo *inc.* - 515 contingentia *inc.* - 516 et (?) numerorum C. - 517 *om. inc.* - 518 *om. inc.* - 519 sub *inc.* - 520 accipiat *inc.* - 521 ad principale *om. inc.* - 522 *om. inc.* - 523 sed forte hic: dices quod *inc.* - 524 *om. inc.* - 525 vulgatam *inc.* - 526 ponuntur *inc.* - 527 subiecto *inc.* - 528 respondetur et dicitur: et nota *inc.* - 529 *om. inc.* - 530 et *add. inc.* - 531 si autem *inc.* - 532 indistincta C. - 533 indistincta C. - 534 numerales *inc.* - 535 tertio sic: preterea *inc.* - 536 possunt *inc.* - 537 *om. inc.* - 538 accidentaliter *inc.* - 539 omnia predicamenta: res omnium predicamentorum *inc.* - 540 subiecti *inc.* - 541 predicati *inc.* - 542 sic C. - 543 idem realiter *inc.* - 544 maiorum *inc.* - 545 et *add. C.* - 546 ponunt *inc.* - 547 *om. inc.* -

[v] Boethius, *In Categorias*, PL 64, ubi?

<Conclusio sexta>

II. 6. Sexta conclusio⁵⁴⁸: *predicamenta non distinguuntur se totis obiective*.

Probatur⁵⁴⁹: illa non distinguuntur se totis obiective a quibus potest abstrahi aliquis unus conceptus⁵⁵⁰ realis sive prime intentionis; sed predicamenta⁵⁵¹ sunt huiusmodi; ergo etc. Maior patet, quia oppositum predicati infert oppositum subiecti. Et⁵⁵² minor probatur in *Questionibus*⁵⁵³ *de ente*⁵⁵⁴, duobus vel⁵⁵⁵ tribus locis in quarta⁵⁵⁶ questione⁵⁵⁷, articulo secundo⁵⁵⁸. [w]

Et hec sufficiant quantum ad presentem tractatum⁵⁵⁹.

⁵⁴⁸ est ista et ultima quod *add. inc.* – ⁵⁴⁹ probatio sic *inc.* – ⁵⁵⁰ univocus *add. inc.* – ⁵⁵¹ sic se habent quod ab eis potest abstrahi aliquis conceptus univocus realis seu prime intentionis *add. inc.* – ⁵⁵² *om. inc.* – ⁵⁵³ conclusionibus *inc.* – ⁵⁵⁴ in *add. inc.* – ⁵⁵⁵ in *add. inc.* – ⁵⁵⁶ qua *inc.* – ⁵⁵⁷ conclusione *inc.* – ⁵⁵⁸ articulo secundo: arguitur dupliciter; nunc non curo. Quere et ibi invenies *inc.* – ⁵⁵⁹ et hec ... tractatum: Explicit ergo opusculum *De distinctione predicamentorum* quod composuit frater Petrus Thomas, ordinis fratrum minorum. Laus Deo *inc.*

[w] Petrus Thomae, *Questiones de ente*, ubi?

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